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FROM THE ESTATE OF
FRANCIS GREENWOOD PEABODY

Overseer, Lecturer,
Parkman Professor of Theology,
Plummer Professor of Christian Morals,
Dean, Professor Emeritus
1877-1936

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LETTERS OF RICHARD WATSON GILDER



Book of the Holy Scriptures

LETTERS OF RICHARD WATSON GILDER

Edited by his Daughter
Rosamond Gilder



Boston & New York
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TO MY MOTHER
WHOSE LIVING INFLUENCE SHAPED THESE PAGES
NOW, IN LOVING MEMORY
I DEDICATE THIS
BOOK

May 28, 1916.

R. G.

PREFATORY NOTE

IN the following pages will be found, expressed in his letters or set forth in the connecting narrative of his daughter, the full current of the life of one of the most vital and variously influential Americans of his time. But since the record is largely a story of the inner life, of ideals, ambitions, and impulses to literary or civic achievement, of fruitions and friendships, it may not be out of place to say a word here concerning the outer and objective man, Richard Watson Gilder. So the reader may meet him as one met him in life, receiving first the startling visual impression of him, and then gradually learning through repeated meetings and continuing correspondence how uncommonly his vivid person expressed the range of his temperament and the variety of his mind.

The impression made by Mr. Gilder at a first meeting can perhaps be no better conveyed than in the following passage taken from a letter written by Miss Cecilia Beaux, in which the sensitive perceptions of the portrait painter find expression in words:

"I shall never forget the first time I saw Mr. Gilder. It was at a meeting of the C—— Club, and a rather dull evening became revived and humanized when he stepped upon the platform, a spare youthful

figure. Even across the space of a lighted hall, full of people, the dark brilliancy of his eyes held one with an almost magic force. They were strangely in contrast with the almost playful lightness of his voice, as he spoke with the charming easy humor with which he knew so well how to relieve a ponderous discussion of a not too important topic.

"When I met him afterwards, I saw that he was not young except with that rare quality of new and eternal youth which was preëminently his. His presence always brought a sense of life with it, the whole of life, not only the reviving aura of a vital and gifted man.

"When, later, he stood for me in my studio in South Washington Square, the close study of his actual features brought to me a still stronger sense of his comprehensive individuality. His face did not so much change from grave to gay, as rather to express many things at once.

"The poet, philanthropist, humorist, man of affairs, never really yielded to one another, or gave up the field. All were ready and able on the instant, and their separate qualities were extraordinarily potent in his eyes. These one could not call 'black' except as a symbol, but their intense darkness and light needed the use of terms more significant than exact, and such terms alone could give the impression of his luminous and richly drawn person."

No doubt the world will remember Gilder as the



poet, the editor, the many-sided publicist; but for his friends, the memory is always that of the "luminous and richly drawn person" described by Miss Beaux — the fit vehicle of a personality unparalleled in my acquaintance for vivacity, sincerity, and abiding charm.

FERRIS GREENSLET.



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LETTERS OF RICHARD WATSON GILDER

LETTERS OF RICHARD WATSON GILDER

CHAPTER I

THE OLD HOUSE

1844-1872

"HOME of my forbears, home of my dreaming childhood,
House that I love with a love instinctive, changeless,
Ancestral, mystical, passionate, tender, sorrowful;
Old house where I was born and my mother before me."

IN these lines, and in the rest of the poem, the title of which is used as the heading of this chapter, my father expresses the intensity with which he clung to the memories of his childhood, and to the people and places which surrounded his earliest years. In the building of any man's character there is nothing more significant than the atmosphere of his boyhood — that atmosphere which is the subtile emanation of so many different things: of personalities, of places, and of periods in history. This is particularly true of my father, whose responsiveness to such influences was especially marked.

What is so important, so difficult to reconstruct, as the setting of a man's childhood and youth? A child described is usually a wooden thing, losing the charm and the appeal which he really possessed because of

the difficulty of recreating so distant and unrecorded a being. It was, therefore, with a peculiar pleasure that I found among my father's papers an autobiographical sketch of his boyhood, written for his children, but filling in so vividly the picture of his early days that, with all its informality of treatment, I give it here without change. I have added a few letters of his own, and some of his mother's which have come to light since this sketch was written, and which he might have used himself had he known of their existence: —

“ I have had in mind, of late, to jot down some details of my life, not an autobiography, nor anything complete and exact — but a record that will tell, at least, where I have lived, and a record, too, of some traits of my forbears, and a reflection of some of the associations of old days — associations of my own and of my parents and their friends. I am writing at this moment, in the very house where I was born — it is now the 7th of April, 1901 — Easter Sunday. I will make a rapid survey of my ‘itinerary,’ so to speak, — and afterwards, as they come to me, I can at leisure put down additional details in their proper places.

“ Two nights ago I came down to ‘Belle Vue’ from New York and I go back to-morrow morning. Friday night I drew out of the garret a little haircloth trunk, not two feet long. In it, as in other similar receptacles, Aunt Maria had packed away letters and relics innumerable: here is the executor's account of my grandfather Thomas Nutt's estate; letters of my father and



BELLE VUE, BORDENTOWN, NEW JERSEY

mother; some of her own letters; letters of the Hunts, our cousins — Susan Wister — Miss Bessy Harwood; children's books and other records like these. Some of the letters were written before I was born; by and by 'little Watsey' comes in through glimpses full of affection.

"I can never get used to the passing of individual life: there was no irreverence in my attitude toward these relics — and yet I could not escape a sense of pity; some of the records were memorials of the deepest, the most secret, most sacred feelings of pure and lovely lives: guarded had these secrets been for long lifetimes: and now scarcely a soul living would turn an ear if they were cried upon the housetops!

"My thoughts moved to-day with a sort of yearning, to those living still, who would know aught of those lives uttered in the letters of the old hair trunk. So I wrote to Sally Harwood (now Mrs. Ward, who lives in California), and as the letter is still on my desk I will quote something from it that seems to belong here: —

" 'Here am I talking to Sally, and so glad that she is alive and responsive to thoughts of the Past — the Past that I cannot let go. I hardly know of a happier, richer present life than mine — richer in affection and in activity, and yet the past is so dreadfully dear to me; not only my own past, but that of those I have loved. Some of the letters were by my lovely mother and my faithful aunt — written before I was born. I cannot bear to think that their lives in those youthful days —

their interests, their associations — should all be blotted out of existence. I wish I could build a work of art to enshrine their souls; — impossible, — impossible! What a curious passion it is, — the passion for life — that those we love should exist in the memories of men. Ah, how fortunate they who have been so great that to be the fathers, the mothers, the mere relatives of them was itself a sort of greatness, an imperishable hold upon human immortality. Yet it cannot be necessary, for the most of mankind passes and leaves no visible sign.'

"The pleasure I have in gloating over these treasures reminds me of the thrill of that lonely and memorable night at the great Pyramid of Gizeh. It was a sort of joyful fright then; a pleasure like this, crossed with mysterious and tumultuous pain. But, also, in reading these letters, I seem to hear a cry that beseeches me to save these gentle hearts from oblivion. All I can do is to tell something about them. These individuals were not for fame, nor have I the art to make them leap to life in strangers' hearts. Would that certain of my verses, where some of these dear voices are echoed, might not be altogether lost from human recollection. These were the influences that gave color to my mind. I have a pious hope that even if they are seldom — some of them never — directly named or described, still in the body of my verse there may exist something that will serve to carry on their spiritual emanations. Would that that verse had the poignancy

of the feeling that prompted it; — yet what can one tell of one's own expression in art, except that it is sincere? But sincerity cannot save, nothing can save the attempt at artistic expression, make it permanently valuable, but its art.

Ancestors

“My understanding is that the Gilders came from England by way of Barbadoes. A Reverend W. H. Gilder, whom I called upon in London, confirmed this belief by the statement that his coat-of-arms included a negro or negroes, which he understood came from some member of the family who owned slaves in the West Indies. He said that the Gilders were men of Kent; that they were apt to be in the church, or surgeons in the army. It is interesting to know that a surgeon of that name was under Wellington at Waterloo; and another surgeon of the name, Dr. Reuben Gilder, from Delaware, was in the Revolutionary army under Washington. Dr. Reuben Gilder, was, I think, an uncle of my grandfather. Every once in a while he costs me a pretty penny. I bought his certificate of membership in the Society of the Cincinnati, and afterwards parted with it to a direct descendant, not of the name. Again, I bought a letter of his describing the battle of Cowpens, having to pay over eighty dollars at auction to get it. I wrote to ask what had happened to the Gilders, that a letter of one of the clan should sell for more than did several letters of

Washington, at the same sale, and was told that it was a valuable and unique account of the battle. Reuben was at the battle of Trenton, and also with Washington at Morristown.

“ John Gilder’s (my grandfather’s) father was a Delaware farmer. He sent his son to Philadelphia to learn the building business; he went to work under a carpenter, and became finally a measurer — a business which no longer exists. These ‘measurers’ took the superficial measurements of a building and made estimates of their value. Once when I was living in Philadelphia, during the war, I saw an old man measuring a building, and learned that he had been a partner of my grandfather. John Gilder was an Alderman in Philadelphia when it was an honor to hold such a position. He was chairman of the Board of Builders of Girard College and laid the corner-stone, on the Fourth of July, 1833. I have always heard that to John Gilder was largely due the imposing appearance of the main building, for he was on the side of those who advocated the massive Greek columns, taking the ground that they were the proper support for the heavy roof prescribed by the terms of the will. Pretty good for a Methodist class leader. Eli K. Price, one of the leading lawyers of the Quaker City, asked me when I was a young man whether I were any relation to John Gilder. I told him I was his grandson. Said Mr. Price, ‘He was one of the most useful citizens Philadelphia ever had.’

"My Grandmother Gilder was a fine-looking woman; of refined countenance and a face that suggested strength of character. She was a Leonard, and of Huguenot blood — a descendant of the Pintards and Gambaults. I have a copy of the crest of the Pintards — with its good motto '*Fais bien — crains rien.*' My father was well pleased with his Huguenot ancestry and named one of his daughters Martina Pintard and another Almira Gambault.

"As to our Nutt ancestors, my mother's father died long before I can remember. I heard that he was a major in the militia, in the War of 1812, and that his health was injured by exposure at that time. His name was Thomas. His father was a prosperous farmer in Burlington County — he owned some seven farms. We have a copy of his will leaving property to his numerous children — with a request that they should take care of a son who after leaving home had never been heard of. He was supposed to be dead, but the old man could not give him up.

"There was a tall, deaf old woman, a 'character' in Bordentown, to whom I was introduced, when a young man, as the son of the Reverend William Henry Gilder; she looked at me sharply and said in her strident voice, 'You hain't as good-looking as yer father.' Then, becoming reminiscent, she shouted with a loud voice, crying — '*Your* grandfather was a devil!' — meaning Thomas Nutt. By that she meant, I believe, that he had a temper. She said she

could not see why my grandmother wanted to marry him. Going back a generation — with a clang came the same ferocious phrase as applied to the father of Thomas; '*He was a devil!*' she yelled — she seemed to like the sentence and spoke it with relish and loud enough for herself to hear, and unnecessarily loud for my own sensibilities. My great-grandmother, she said, would go out to the stable and, after my devil of a great-grandfather had hitched up a team, would cut the traces to keep him from leaving the family hearth for the pleasures of the town. Why she did not, with this as evidence, cry out that my great-grandmother was a devil, I do not know. Neither do I know how much truth there was in this devil-talk. I remember no incidents of the kind concerning either progenitor from the lips of my mother or aunt.

"There is an excellent daguerreotype of my grandmother, whose name was Lydia Bunting. In it I am leaning at her side. I remember the occasion well. It was in a Philadelphia daguerreotype establishment. They put a little image up before me; my memory is that it was a figure of a man sitting on a sofa — and that it bowed its head and shook its finger — and said, '*Don't do that; don't do that!*' There was probably some ventriloquism about it; but I was sure the small figure spoke, and I kept still and attentive.

"It was not long after this that there was a solemn gathering in my grandmother's room at Belle Vue. She was in bed. I was down on the floor under a chair.



RICHARD WATSON GILDER

Age, 4 years



Soon I was taken away. I was told afterward that my grandmother had died. Her daughters were deeply attached to her. The daguerreotype of her keeps her memory fresh in my mind: a small person with fiery eyes, regular and delicate features; a true 'old lady's' face, with its clear complexion well wrinkled with age.

Birth and Childhood

"I was born at Belle Vue, Bordentown, New Jersey, on February 8th, 1844. The Belle Vue property was given to my grandmother in 1806 and it is probable that the house was built in 1788. I was only a few years old when my father gave up his school in Bordentown and bought the Rev. Dr. Hawks's seminary in Flushing. I did not make the journey with the family but remained a while with Aunt Maria in Bordentown.

"A few years ago I went down to Bordentown one afternoon and spent the night. I wrote a long letter from there to my oldest boy, then at college — and here it is in part: —

"'I dived into Aunt Maria's papers for an hour or two. The dear, faithful soul! Among her most sacred treasures was a large lock of my own hair at three years and one month old — a golden curl that must have been something like yours. I did not have time to look at many letters, but came upon one by accident written when I was five years old by her to my mother in Flushing. In it were two references to me that made me cry there all alone in the attic; for it

brought back the passion of her wonderful life-long love for the little child I always was to her. She says she is almost wild to see mother and the children, too, especially 'my sweet Burnie!' ('Burnie' was one of Aunt Maria's nicknames for me, her 'burnie-bee' sometimes.) And again at the end of a long letter: 'Give my love to Mr. Gilder and the boys—and a kiss for my own darling — ah, my dear sister, that boy, I fear, is my earthly idol. I love him so much that it hurts. Next to being with you, having him with me is my sweetest earthly solace.' Do you wonder that I broke down, my dear boy, remembering how on her dying bed — more than forty years afterwards — she clasped her arms around me with the same intense affection. You can imagine that it was something to know that her love was returned in childhood with a sort of fury of devotion — and all through life with an unfailing flame that comforted her to the last. Indeed, I had two mothers, both of whom I loved dearly; each in a different way, for they were different.

"I found also a quaint little child's book that my father had given me; and the House that Jack Built belonging to the little sister who was named after Aunt Maria and who died before I was born, and whose place, in some degree, I took with Aunt Maria."

The letters that passed between the two sisters when they were living apart — the Gilder family in



Flushing and "Aunt Maria" Nutt in Bordentown — give most vivid glimpses of "little Watsey," then four years old. Later there are messages from little Watsey himself, and finally his own first effort, written when he was eight years old.

Mrs. Gilder to Miss Nutt

[About 1847.]

"The night of Watsey's arrival was the happiest one I have spent since I left home. He appeared almost overcome with joy, threw himself into my arms and kissed me over and over again — and the baby he almost devoured. A happier boy I never saw. He has been so all the time until last evening. I was in the sitting room with him and the baby, and all at once he burst out sobbing and crying as though his heart would break. He said he wanted to go home and see Aunty; it was a long time before he got composed. He tried to keep from crying, but every little while there would be a burst of feeling he could not control. Dear little fellow — how much he has improved in health and how much more gentle he is — instead of being spoiled he is greatly improved. He is sitting by me in my bed-room, 'writing' to you and talking about you all the time."

"February, 1848.

"When you write to Watsey again please direct to Rev. R. W. Gilder, D.D. — he has come out quite a

preacher. (He is just four years old this month!) He collected the girls around him on Sunday in the school room, and got up in the arm-chair behind the desk — and held forth for some time to the affected audience! I was really moved to tears — Mr. Gilder was nearly convulsed. I only wish you could have seen him. He first gave out the hymn — then read, preached and prayed, — it was the most amusing thing I have witnessed for a long time."

"December, 1848.

"Watsey is standing beside me teasing me to write for him. I wish you could see him — he never looked so pretty. His hair has just been fixed, curled each side — and a very frisky-looking top-knot — he really looks beautiful. Now this is what he says: 'Tell Aunty that this is a *monstrous* big house, but I love her more than it will hold. And I wish Aunty was well enough to come here and bring my play-things — don't tell her that we will keep her here when she comes!'

"He is very well — and much fatter than he was. He got angry with me this afternoon, because I would not let him go with the boys to the bath house. He made me roar — said he: 'Ma, that's just the way you bring up your children, make them afraid of water and everything else.'"

First Letter: To his Mother

BORDENTOWN, Jan. 31, 1852.

Watson Gilder

My Dear Ma I am now standing by auntys desk and as I have nothing to do I thought I would wrte a few lines to you aunty and I were left at Jersey City and had to stay there all night we had a very nice time there and when the cars came a past thay shook the house and now we are at home I should like to know how pa is and if Johns cold is better and how is willie and Jenny and Martina and my sled is not broken and it is as strong as ever how is the whole of the family I am not very well you mus come here very soon and see how the town has improved

your affectionat
son Richard Watson

Gildr

*To Joe and Will Allen*ST. THOMAS HALL, FLUSHING,
March 7, 1855.

I have been trying to find time to write to you for a long while. I have at last succeeded. Aunt Maria is going home to-morrow and can bring you my letter. I expect you can skate very well now — I can a little.

In five weeks we have vacation and perhaps I shall be able to visit Bordentown then. I am quite anxious to know how the young soldiers get on, as I am Com-

mander-in-Chief I feel interested. I think you will have to appoint some one else in my place as I am there so little. I want you to write to me and tell me whether you have gotten up any new plays since I have been there. I am President of an Association got up among some of the little girls. It is a Literary Association, we read, learn poetry, and write compositions.

In regard to the soldiers it is not necessary that they should all wear the same colored pants if they have white stripes down the side and also across their breasts and around their caps. As for the guns — you can raise a shilling subscription among us and if any of you go down to the city they could be bought there. The officers can buy their own tin swords and by this means we will be quite rigged out.

Have you read *Gullivers Travels*? I am reading them now and find them most amusing. — write soon to your

Affectionate friend,

R. W. GILDER.

Boyhood

In 1858 a religious revival took place in Flushing. With his usual interest in all that went on around him, "Watsey" attended innumerable prayer meetings, lectures, and services. He seems to have been broad-minded as to sect, for his diary records visits to Methodist, Episcopal, Dutch Reformed, and Catholic houses



WILLIAM HENRY GILDER




JANE NUTT GILDER



of worship. Though he considered himself unregenerated and lacking in "sufficient faith," and went through an intensely emotional period of "mourning and repentance," in the end he feels that "religion is a delightful thing." The entry in his diary for the 8th of February of this year shows him in a serious mood: "This is my birthday, I am fourteen years old. *Tempus fugit* — I am getting old. It is time that I should act with more discretion. Perhaps whatever I am to be depends on what I do now." Towards the end of this winter his parents decided to send him away to the country for a time, as the strain of this emotional excitement, together with his studies in Greek and Hebrew, had told on his strength.

To return to his own narrative: —

"When I was twelve years old and we were living in Flushing father took me to see the Mission at Five Points in New York — he knew the missionary. We also went through the neighborhood. I remember going up some stairs in a house in Cow Bay — an *impasse*. A door was opened and I saw in the half-darkness a huddle of human creatures. A woman with a blackened eye came to the door and begged the missionary to save her. She said, 'They are trying to kill me here.' We climbed down into a dreadful sub-cellar, and I saw a man apparently dying on a litter of straw. This was in 1856. There are no such slums in New York now. Father little thought he was taking



a future Tenement House Commissioner on his first tour of inspection, though he was evidently educating his boy in philanthropy.

"At Flushing I used to frequent the office of the 'Long Island Times,' edited and printed by Walter R. Burling. At that time I wrote out a single copy of a paper of my own; and it was circulated at so much a reading. Mr. Burling offered to teach me how to set type, and I got out several copies of the 'St. Thomas Register' in his office — in 1856-57 when I was twelve or thirteen years old. I wrote part of the paper — set all the type, and then, standing on a box, 'rolled' the ink for each impression. My father wrote some of the editorials and was greatly interested in the undertaking. The paper was dedicated to no less a purpose than 'the Promotion of Literature, Morality, Religion, and Science.' The publisher promised 'on all occasions to observe a proper degree of dignified decorum, but he would not allow himself to be governed either by fear or favor!'

"I was the only boy in my father's school. Evidently the 'Flushing Female College,' for it was incorporated under that title, was not a business success. Some said it was because my father was so generously hospitable. He educated some of the girls at his own expense; and a good many lived at the Hall who probably did not contribute largely to its revenues. At any rate, we broke up a year or two before the war, and my father reëntered the active ministry, taking a

Methodist Episcopal church at Redding, Connecticut, for a year, and then at Fair Haven, near New Haven, for another year.

"I have many recollections of Fair Haven — for instance, climbing into the unfloored loft of the parsonage, and there, away from the sight and sense of the busy world, writing yards and yards of extremely juvenile verse in the style of the 'Lady of the Lake' — or if not *in* the style, *at* the style, we will say. I also remember my father's anxieties about entire sanctification! There was an entirely sanctified member of his flock who gave him more trouble than all the rest of the godly put together. I wonder if the present pastor is troubled with this kind of virtuous and saintly product of his preaching. I suppose the same kind of mind now takes naturally to Christian Science and similar enthusiasms.

"In the summer of 1860, while the family were in the Fair Haven parsonage, I visited Colonel Joseph W. Allen's family at Bordentown. Sally Harwood, daughter of Admiral Harwood, was there also, and the Lansdale boys used to come up from Philadelphia, and the Maillards were there at their home, Adolphe, — son of Joseph Bonaparte's secretary, — and his wife, who was Julia Ward Howe's sister, and Aunt Maria Nutt was in town and we had a great time. We started 'The Leaflet,' and the New Jersey Bell and Everett party took it up and made it a weekly. Saturday night we sat around the dining-room table and

folded and directed it, in the intervals of laughter and general hilarity.

"While at Fair Haven the war loomed up, a menacing cloud on the horizon. We children used to play at war with Forts Sumter and Moultrie in snow. An enthusiastic ministerial friend encouraged my father to go back to teaching and to open a day-school at Yonkers. This he did. I can hardly say I was a 'teacher,' though I helped a little. But the war was coming up, and my father entered the army as Chaplain of the Fortieth New York (Mozart) Regiment, in camp near us. Brother Will entered the regiment of 'Duryea's' Zouaves. I walked one Sunday from Yonkers to Fort Schuyler to see my soldier brother, and thence the same day to Flushing, where my brother Frank was living.


"In December I joined my father for a few months outside of Alexandria. In his letters to my mother there are many glimpses of our winter encampment, and this mention of me: 'Have you seen Watsey's letter in the last "Long Island Times"? He evidently has a genius for writing. It will not be long before he beats his "daddy" in that line. I did not write one word of either of his letters. In fact, I knew nothing of them until I saw [them] in the paper. He is entitled to full credit for both those letters. I think he writes remarkably well, and only wish he would write oftener for publication. It would be good practice for him.'

"Soon after this I returned to the family, and again we were living in our beloved Belle Vue. But what a time of strain it must have been for mother, with her husband and a son both in the army. She had daily letters from the front. There was a scheme for my teaching school in Bordentown, but it came to nothing. I got a chance at a clerkship in the railroad office at Pier No. 1, New York. I tried it a day and threw up the job. It required a sort of 'lightning calculator' to do the work. I was pleased afterwards to learn that they had to put two men in the place of the expert who had grown up in the position. Through my Aunt Sarah's acquaintance with Mrs. Fairthorne, I was taken into Bullitt & Fairthorne's law and collection office in Philadelphia. I was in the collection department, but proudly entered my name as a student of law under John C. Bullitt. As a law student I got but little beyond Blackstone, but I remember that work with relish.

The Civil War

"It was the Gettysburg summer. There was great excitement in Philadelphia at the approach of the rebels. There was a great commotion, and it seemed to me a good time to go to war. I was under age, — but nineteen, — and could not go without the written permission of my parents. My father was with the Army of the Potomac, and my mother was induced to consent to my going because it was thought that the

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battery with which I desired to enlist — namely, the First Philadelphia Artillery, commanded by Captain Landis — would do duty in fortifications rather than in the field. My mother was loath to sign the permit, but finally consented. The date of my enrollment was June 24, 1863.

“Our Battery was rather a tenderfoot organization, consisting largely of lawyers and professional men in general. Charles G. Leland and his brother were, like myself, privates in the Company.

“We went in cattle cars to Harrisburg and crossed the river to the fort on the southern side of the Susquehanna. When we were told to break step in marching across the bridge, I had the feeling that indeed this was war, because I had heard that it was necessary for troops not to march as usual in crossing a bridge, on account of the danger from the vibration that would take place. We went out to what was called Fort Couch, on Hummel's Height. The fortifications were not complete when we arrived, and there has always lingered in my memory the picturesque scene of our working hurriedly in the trenches at night, to send the wall higher and make the trench deeper. It was in my mind a truly military picture. The more military the situation, of course, the better I was pleased. Military scenes were by no means unfamiliar to me, as I had myself been a member of a cadet militia company in Bordentown (I was third sergeant and secretary, as I remember) — I had seen many troops in different



RICHARD WATSON GILDER
In uniform of Anderson Cadets



places, — but this new experience of being part of the war itself, actually enlisted in the service of the United States, was a constant source of interest and inspiration.

“I must now tell how I came to be No. 1 on our gun. I had never been trained in the artillery manual, although I knew the infantry manual at arms quite well. Being a youth, and slight, I was not at once detailed to go up to the battlements and take my place with the older men. One day I was sitting in my tent at Fort Couch and an officer who happened to pass found me crying. He asked me what was the matter, and I blurted out, ‘I want to go front!’ He replied, ‘Oh, well, we can settle that very soon’; so he had me detailed for the purpose. When I got up to the line of fortifications I was so delighted at being let to take right hold as a full-blown soldier that I suppose I was a pretty apt pupil, and my former training with small arms made me able quickly to learn the new drill, — so much so that one of the officers came to me and asked me if I would take charge of a gun. I told him that I thought it would be very rash to have one so inexperienced responsible for a gun, so instead I was made No. 1 of the squad that had charge of our gun, and went through the campaign in that capacity.”

It was here, at Harrisburg, that the incident occurred, related by Mr. C. Stuart Patterson in his

description of my father as a young soldier, which he read at a memorial meeting held in Philadelphia shortly after my father's death: "I see the entrenchments defending Harrisburg; it is an all-night vigil. Most of the men are sleeping about the guns and Gilder sits on the parapet beside his Sergeant, and relieves the tedium of weary waiting by quoting snatches of verse and song. At last daybreak comes, and there, in the distance, is a solitary horseman in gray who marks the real high-water mark, the crest of the topmost wave of disunion, the farthest north of the army of the South; and Gilder saw that man."

"Soon we started southward on the heels of the rebels. We were pretty close to them and constantly came upon the hoof-prints of their horses. When we got within two or three miles of Carlisle we were permitted to halt and rest. While thus resting I saw a horseman dash up the road from Carlisle, and in a flash we were mounted on the caissons and going like mad toward the town. I shall never forget that ride. The springless gun-carriages leaped into the air at every bump and rut in the road, and we had to hang on for dear life. Such a banging and thumping and tossing I never had before, nor have I known anything like it since.

"It did not take us long to get into the city; but to our amazement, instead of rebels, we found a collation in the market-place; men and women had turned out

to make us welcome. Among the good things to eat were some raw onions. I had never eaten a whole raw onion before, but they tickled my soldier appetite. Memorable onions those — mixed in my mind with burning buildings and exploding shells! While I was quietly munching I heard a fearful cry: 'The rebels are coming up that street!' In an instant we had flown, each man to his place. I mounted my caisson. Our gun dashed around two sides of the square, and then careered to the center of the cross-roads. In another moment I was on my feet and driving a cannon-ball into the gun with great enthusiasm and with the agile assistance of No. 2.

"In as little time as I can tell it, what a change of scene! Men, women, and children hurrying through the square to seek a place of refuge. One old gentleman stopped for a moment to talk with me at the cross-roads, and in about half a minute we found out that my dear friends of Admiral Harwood's family were our friends in common. I remember telling him that I had never been in battle before, but that I hoped I would do my duty.

"Another change, — all the civilians had fled from sight and the rebel shells were flying over our heads. Then a horse and horseman came up the street blindfolded and carrying a flag of truce. We heard afterward that he had demanded of our General, William F. Smith (known as Baldy Smith), the surrender of the town, and Baldy had told them that if they

wanted it they could come and take it. A little longer and the flag of truce had disappeared. Trees were cut down and abattis formed at the entrance to the square. Before it got dark I could see the movements of the rebel gunners down the street. The Union gun next to me was, I believe, fired, but for some reason we were not ordered to fire our gun, so there is no 'fraternal blood' on my hands! By the way, as this cannon-ball was not fired in action it remained where put during the rest of the campaign, our amateur knowledge of gunnery including no instructions as to extracting cannon-balls, by any process other than explosion of gunpowder. As we marched over the rough mountain roads, I dodged the mouth of that cannon for weeks.

"The rebels seemed to get our range immediately, because one of the first shells exploded quite near me, and a piece of it took off the sword blade and a part of the hand of Lieutenant Stuart Patterson who stood not far from me on my right as I faced the rebels. He walked past me, and I heard him say, as he went by, the blood dripping from his wound, 'My God! I am shot!' The glass in the street lamp on the corner at my left was smashed. As it grew dark the square was lit up by the burning of the United States barracks on the edge of the town.

"We were told finally to leave and retire for shelter around the edges of the square, or wherever we desired to go within call. I sat down beyond the market-

place on the side of the square nearest the enemy. Close to me, on the steps of one of the houses, was a group of regular troops, and they swore mightily at the impertinence of the rebels in burning their barracks. I told them that I thought this was no time to swear as they were doing. I can imagine their surprise at my mild remonstrance — but they took it in good part. I do not remember that my advice had any immediate effect upon their conversation. Afterwards I went over into the market-place, where I lay down on a bench. Then I thought I would go up near my gun again. I remember that on the way a shell came over my head, and I lay down to let it pass. I suppose lying down did not make me much more safe than standing up, but it made me feel better and as if I had escaped a peril. I came to feel, in fact, that there was not much danger from these things anyhow, as long as I could lie down, so I stretched myself under a tree just at the right of my gun. While there an officer called for volunteers to take the gun out of range of fire. I stood up, with three other men. Just as he ordered us to start, I saw a flash and said, 'Hold on!' We halted a moment, and in that moment a shell exploded three feet above the gun. Immediately after the explosion we rushed out, took the piece by the wheels and brought it out of the line of fire. Afterwards I went back to the tree, and I remember that these shells got to have a less and less terrifying effect on me, and I finally went to sleep.

The long-swelling, up-and-down whine and howl of the shells over our heads I shall never forget.

"A quarter of a century after this event I was in a party that accompanied George William Curtis to Gettysburg. I did not till then fully realize that we had had a part in that very battle whose guns I had heard growling in the distance; certainly we kept, for a little while at least, a part of Lee's left from being present at the fight.

"This night of the bombardment was the evening of July 1st. After we left Carlisle we struck the mountains and bad weather. There are certain war scenes which are burned into my memory. Some I have already described above and others I will mention.

"We seemed to be close to the rebels, every now and then, for we would halt in a wood and prepare for battle, hastily constructing an abattis for our protection at the front. There was one thing I did not like, and that was the appearance of an ambulance as a companion to our march.

"I remember one night, when I was trudging along in the dark road over a roadbed where had been scattered loose stones to form a foundation, I heard Charles G. Leland, who has since written his memoirs of those days, and another comrade, talking me over in a kindly — even admiring — manner. One of them said that he had given me something to eat, and I know I must have seemed very fragile and at times woe-begone, possibly the youngest of the crowd.

"I remember Leland in those days as a splendid expresser of our miseries. He had a magnificent vocabulary wherewith he could eloquently and precisely describe our general condition of starvation, mud, ill-equippedness, and overwork. As I think of those days I hear reverberating over the mountain roads the call, 'Cannoneers to the wheels,' and in imagination I plunge knee-deep into the mire and grab the spokes of the caisson wheels.

"One night we spent at a forge. I burnt my knees at the fire outdoors, while in my ears was pouring a deluge from the clouds. I finally gave it up, and spent the rest of the night crouching upon the fire-bed of the forge itself, most uncomfortably. At other times no softer bed appeared to me to exist than two triangular fence-rails laid side by side. They hold the body up well and make the ground a much softer couch.

"I remember being so starved as to eat crackers that had fallen on the ground — and I eat, too, wheat from the fields rubbed in the hands to free it from the ear!

"General Smith has since told me that he asked permission, that night at Carlisle, to throw the militia, including our company, across Lee's line of retreat. If he had been permitted to do so, I suppose I would not have been here now.

"I can hardly describe the feeling of relief with which we became an actual part of the Army of the

Potomac. These veterans seemed to embody all that was experienced and powerful. When we first joined them we were camping near a part of the country over which both armies had recently passed. There were dead horses in all sorts of postures. I noticed a hastily constructed sign, with the words painted large upon it, 'Kilpatrick is not dead.' There had been a rumor that he had been killed while leading a dash of cavalry in his impetuous fashion.

"The second and last time that I shed tears in my brief experience as a soldier was when we had camped near the Army of the Potomac, in which my father and brother were. It was evening and I went to the officer in command and asked leave to go and find my father. He said I could not go until the next morning. I went up to a fence near by and looking out through the twilight in the direction of the great army, I confess that the tears streamed down my cheeks. Early the next morning those who were up betimes said that the sky was lit with rocket signals. I was permitted to go to look for my father. I walked mile upon mile along the turnpike where the fences and grain fields had been beaten down. I was going in the opposite direction from the march of the Army of the Potomac. The uniform of my Battery was strange to that army. It consisted of a high soft gray hat, blue blouse, any colored trousers, with leggings. Having seen Miller's Battery go by, the guns of which were rather small-sized, they supposed that I belonged to that

battery. I thought it incumbent upon me to explain that I did not, and I made the disclaimer to platoon after platoon, and regiment after regiment, who jeered at me mile by mile. To add to my unhappiness I was unable to find the Fortieth Regiment, and was compelled to rejoin the battery without seeing either my father or my brother.

"When we came to Chambersburg I had time to write several letters, of which I found afterwards that a number had been saved, and I give them here. The first is addressed to my mother in answer to one of hers in which she evidently had expressed a sort of remorse at having signed the paper to let me go into the campaign. Amazing conceit of youth — I actually read her a lecture in patriotism. She, with a husband and another son already in the army. She whose daily life was a sacrifice.

"'FORT COUCH, June 29, 1863.

"'Your letter came promptly and was most welcome. Of course I do not think you ought to have refused permission to my going. Why, a considerable part of the company would not be here defending our homes from the enemy, had not their parents consented. I know how hard it is for one to have so many to be anxious about, but a great war does not occur in every generation, and besides there are many that have made, and are making, even greater sacrifices.

"'I have (interrupted for drill) no doubt the Phila-

delphians are in a greater state of excitement than are we. Please never believe the worst news. We are taking it very coolly. A great deal of interest is transpiring all the time, of which I will tell on my return. Has Auntie sent my night-cap — smoking-cap?


“Tuesday morning.

“‘The enemy are said to be retreating — if so we will be after them with a long stick.’

“‘NEAR WAYNESBORO, PA., July 8, 1863.

“‘We arrived in this place this afternoon. There is a part of the Army of the Potomac here, which has been chasing a part of the enemy from Gettysburg. We have had no mail for several days and my anxiety is great to hear of Pa and Will: I will try and find out how letters may be directed in order to reach me. I may hear from the Fortieth through members of the army, and we may possibly be thrown together.

“‘I am writing now (this second time) by the camp-fire. We are on a hill beyond the town, with a splendid view. It is between 9 and 10. I will be on guard between 1 and 3 to-night, beneath these stars. Our experience since we started from Harrisburg has been remarkably severe, and you may suppose has knocked considerable of the romance out of the idea of soldiering. Lee has been well beaten, and we hope this cruel war will soon be over. So may it be. I had a letter from Ned on the Fourth of July — my last letter.



““You must not think that I am entirely down in the mouth. It is the impossibility of hearing from Pa and Will for several days yet, and I know what a terrible battle was this last.

““We expect our commissary to-day from Harrisburg and I may get letters. With much love to yourself and Auntie and to the children, and to all my friends whom I think of always, but cannot call by name in this place,

““I remain your loving son,

““WATSEY.’

““NEAR CHAMBERSBURG, PA., July 22, 1863.

““We were awakened a short time ago at 4½, so I have plenty to write before the eight o’clock mail. We are encamped by a delightful wood, tall and free from underbrush, where we recline at the foot of the trees and enjoy the beautiful breeze and talk and doze and dream. But things are not as they seem, and far from being contented we want to go home, as every once in a while you would hear some big man call out, when we would find ourselves in a peculiarly miserable condition during the campaign — “I want to go home” some one would whine out just at the climax of misery, and wake an echo in every heart.

““This morning the Administration has opened its heart and is going to give us molasses. Three cheers for Lincoln! We don’t suffer from hunger here, but as we have not even yet our regular government rations

we suffer more from pies of our own buying! We get the papers the same evening now, which is a splendid thing, and one which we know how to appreciate as we never did before.

“I am very glad that I came a-soldiering this campaign. The disagreeables will be not so in the retrospect, and the acquisition of knowledge and experience in the subject military will amply make up for all of them. It is well, also, to know how it feels to have shells screaming and exploding around you, wounding men and killing horses. I was not as brave as I should like to have been, neither was I so much frightened as not to be willing — and even anxious — to go into another battle, if for no other reason than to see if I could not take things more coolly.

“The candles are lit in the tents and the men are all enjoying themselves therein, in good soldier kind. The camp is full of song and enjoyment; some who are not at present singing are either reading the morning papers or, like myself, writing to “home, sweet home,” which place, by the way, every man in the company thinks he will hereafter appreciate as never before.

“Tattoo has just beaten —

“I have learned enough of the cruelties of war in this past few weeks to make the subject appear in its true light.”

Death of William Henry Gilder

After the close of the emergency campaign my father returned to Bordentown. He had not been there long when the news came of his father's death at Brandy Station, Virginia. I find in the history of the Fortieth (Mozart) Regiment, a sketch of my grandfather's life, ending with these words: —

“Chaplain Gilder died a martyr to duty, and gave his life as truly and bravely to his country as any soldier who died at the cannon's mouth. While the regiment was in winter quarters in 1864 he visited the hospital to offer religious consolation to the sufferers there, and contracted smallpox, of which he died. In time of battle he was often on the firing-line, regardless of the danger he encountered. No truer or braver man ever wore the garb of Christianity. Like the master he served, Chaplain Gilder sought every opportunity to visit the sick and minister to their spiritual necessities. Two days after his death the officers of his regiment held a meeting to express their regret, and suitable resolutions were unanimously adopted.”

My father was left virtually the head of the family, as his two older brothers were away, William in the army and Frank in Philadelphia.

Paymaster on the Camden & Amboy Railroad

“It now became necessary for me to earn more than the three dollars a week that was my clerk-pay. So

my friends got a place for me in the paymaster's office of the Camden & Amboy Railroad under Colonel William P. McMichael.

"In Jean's 'Tom-Boy at Work' ¹ she has a story of her brother reading poetry and leaving \$30,000 in a cottage, and resigning on that account his place as paymaster on the railroad. This is fanciful in detail, but has some foundation. For a few moments I left a bundle containing \$10,000 in a sort of switch-house near the canal in Trenton, after paying a man. I went half a long block toward the railroad station and then, missing it, ran back and found it where I left it. I do not remember mentioning it at the office, and certainly did not resign. I did once try to resign when the jumper on which I was going down from Bordentown — i.e., from White Hill to Camden — to pay the men along the route, collided with a train; i.e., the two Irishmen and I saw a train coming, one of them jumped off ahead of the jumper and was knocked down. We pulled him out, and one of the men and I got the jumper off the track, but before it was quite off, the train, slowing down, struck one end of it. Feeling responsible, I went back to the office and told Colonel McMichael, chief paymaster, I was willing to resign — but he would not listen to it.

"It was really outrageous management to send an unarmed youth up and down the road, paying the men, and liable at any moment to meet a train, or be

¹ *The Tom-Boy at Work*, by Jeannette L. Gilder.

overtaken by one, on a single-track road. Not only that, but I was sent down to Philadelphia all alone, for large sums of money, which I carried, after counting, in rough bundles. It is a mystery why I was not robbed. I remember, one evening, getting back late to Bordentown, and having to walk from the station down to the paymaster's office at White Hill, with a large sum of money which was to be used during the next few days in paying the rolls. As I walked along the track by the river, in the twilight, I met scores of workmen going home, many of whom doubtless knew what I was carrying, and any of whom, with a bit of wood, could have turned and knocked me over from behind, and after relieving me of the bundle of bank notes, pushed me into the water. But I did not worry about the danger at the time. All this loose way of paying was changed after I left.

Preface to "Clementine's" Poems

"While I was in the railroad paymaster's office I was interested in Mrs. Howarth and edited her poems. I was attracted by certain lyrics signed 'Clementine,' which were appearing in the Trenton papers, some of which had lately been gathered into a volume entitled 'The Wind Harp.' They were impromptu in character, conventional in form and subject, without subtlety of thought or originality of phrase, — but they were evidently heartfelt and showed a natural sense of song and an unaffected pathos. They were

rendered all the more interesting to us in Bordentown by our learning that the writer was a poor woman who had been a factory girl, and who now added the caning of chairs to the heavy household work of a large family. One of the songs. 'T is but a Little Faded Flower,' was already widely known — and is so yet.

"My duties sometimes led me past the very plain little home of the caner of chairs, which stood facing the noisy track of the Philadelphia & Trenton Railroad in Trenton. At the first opportunity I made bold to call upon 'Clementine,' my errand being, I believe, the purchase of a copy of 'The Wind Harp.' The poet withdrew her arms from the wash-tub in order to wait upon me — with a sweetness and dignity, with a look in her large, blue, expressive eyes, and a smile upon her mobile features, which are among the best memories of my life.

"Soon after this, a new edition of her poems being called for, it devolved upon me to make a selection from her published work, preceded by a brief sketch. This book, entitled 'Poems by Ellen Clementine Howarth,' was published, on a generous basis, by Martin R. Dennis & Co., of Newark, New Jersey, in 1867-68. But about this time Mrs. Howarth suffered a paralytic stroke, and was unable to help me with the revision of her verses, giving me entire freedom in their reëditing. The new volume was a selection, and not nearly so full as 'The Wind Harp.' In my

inexperience, I mended, as I thought, a few lines, — whereas in a later edition I restored these lines to their original form, the changes made being omissions.

On the "Newark Advertiser"

"Through the Reverend Horace S. Bishop and his wife (she was Mrs. Kinney's sister) I became, soon after this, a local and legislative reporter on the Newark 'Daily Advertiser' (*not* principal editorial writer — that place being filled by Dr. S. B. Hunt). Mr. George W. Childs once, on account of his acquaintance with me, came on from Philadelphia and looked the 'Daily' plant over, apparently with a view to purchase, but he told me it was held at too high a figure.


"I remember the Copperhead¹ druggist at my boarding table, who told me of Lincoln's assassination, the last man I should have wanted to hear such news from. I went to the 'Advertiser' office and Foster and I cried together in the sanctum. I reported Lincoln's funeral from Philadelphia to Newark.² The evening of that day I was waiting in Philadelphia for the funeral train to start. I had and have little desire to look upon faces from which the light of life has departed; but suddenly it came upon me that I had never seen the great President, and must not let go by this last opportunity to behold at least the

¹ Copperheads — the party in the North opposed to the war and in sympathy with secession.

² From here to end of paragraph from R. W. G.'s "Lincoln the Leader."

deserted temple of a lofty soul. To my grief I found it was too late; the police had drawn their line across the path in front of Independence Hall. But my earnest desire prevailed, and I was the last to pass in by the window and behold, in a sudden dazzle of lights and flowers, the still features of that face we all know so well. There lay the martyred Lincoln, dead on that very spot where, four years before, he had consecrated himself to assassination, rather than that he should be unfaithful to the principles of liberty which, from that sacred chamber, — now doubly sacred, — were given to the world. Soon I went my way into the night and walked alone to the distant station, hearing behind me the wailing music of the funeral dirge. The procession approached; the funeral train moved out beneath the stars. Never shall I forget the groups of weeping men and women at the little towns through which we passed, and the stricken faces of the thousands who, in the cities, stood like mourners at the funeral of a beloved father.

“While a correspondent for the ‘Newark Advertiser’ I sometimes amused myself with legislation. An old fake portrait-painter came along and began lobbying to get a job to make paintings of the whole historic list of the New Jersey governors! I spoiled his game. Also, I took a keen interest in the election of Senator Frederick T. Frelinghuysen. I got a charter through for a society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and started a state society of



which I became secretary. I got many votes for a bill modifying the capital punishment law and making it a matter for the jury, I believe, — or was it the judge? — to decide whether the verdict of guilty should carry with it execution or imprisonment for life. (I have sometimes thought since that every ten years a commission should decide as to every man's fitness to live. But in later years I began again to doubt the wisdom of capital punishment.)

“At this time I became acquainted with Marvin R. Bovee, a Western agitator against capital punishment. He showed a rather pressing sense of hospitality — reversed, that is — and quartered himself on us, one Christmas. I was somewhat startled by his suggestion that I should ‘run my name across the back of a note’ of his for several hundred dollars, put it in the bank and give him the proceeds. I did not see my way clear to this transaction, as I needed all my cash and credit for the support of my mother's family. Years afterwards he bounded into the ‘Century’ office and told me his friends had come to him, with the suggestion of a testimonial. ‘No,’ he said, ‘I won't have it! *But* now, if you say endowment, — I'm with you.’ I endowed to the tune of \$25, and that was the last of my acquaintance with this cheery philanthropist. There was a delightful old Quaker named Allison, a quiet, serious, genial man, who was haunting Trenton in the interest of prison reform. I offered to help him, and got up a bill and put it

through, establishing a commission of inquiry, with him on it. The commission did excellent unearthing work and brought about needed reforms.

"Once at the close of the legislative session I wrote a piece of doggerel, hitting off the prominent members of the legislature. This was offered by a member as a resolution, passed and printed at the public expense, so that each member could take copies home with him. It has been reprinted in later years in Newark.

"At times during my newspaper work I sent weekly letters to other papers. This experience, and that of my legislative correspondence, put into my mind so strongly the idea that I must 'forward copy,' that it has haunted me, off and on, all my life, in dreams. The nightmare is that it is some time since a news letter was sent in by me, and if I don't hurry along some 'copy,' I shall be left high and dry without pay.

The "Newark Morning Register"


"R. Newton Crane was a reporter and city editor with me on the 'Advertiser,' and he induced me to go in with him and with his father in the establishment of the 'Newark Morning Register.' While working at this — perhaps before — at Edward Seymour's request I began writing editorial paragraphs for 'Hours at Home,' — in a department called 'Leisure Moments.' While still on the 'Register' (which was not paying) I took the editorship of 'Hours at Home'

(Scribner, Armstrong & Co., of which Mr. Seymour was a member), for the last years of its existence — i.e., from November, 1869, to October, 1870. Mrs. Dodge also had to do with the invitation for me to write for 'Hours at Home.' My editing of it being anonymous, I naturally was much pleased and encouraged to come upon a notice of the magazine in the 'Tribune' expressing surprise at its marked improvement.

"The failure of the 'Register' enabled me to devote all my time to literature — that is, to literary editing; and in November, 1870, came out the first number of 'Scribner's,' with Dr. J. G. Holland as editor, and myself as assistant—i.e., managing editor. After I became acquainted with Dr. Holland I found that he, like myself, had refused invitations to edit the 'Northern Monthly,' a magazine owned in Newark. It was afterwards, by a singular coincidence, as I remember, absorbed in our new magazine, 'Scribner's Monthly.'

Literary Beginnings

"I have been asked often when I began to write. Let me see. Certainly I matured slowly, though I had a false reputation for precocity. For instance, when very young I was in Dr. James Strong's Greek and Hebrew classes — and I was the only child in the classes. Also I studied French when very young. But I was not bright in these studies. By some chance I got hold of Milton, when I was perhaps ten or twelve



years old, and liked him. Father strongly encouraged my writing when I was not more than twelve. The first thing I remember was his urging me to answer a query in the 'Long Island Times.' Then he helped me with my little paper, the 'St. Thomas Register.' Later, when sixteen, in a wonderfully happy summer vacation, I, with two other boys, edited 'The Leaflet,' as I have told already.

"When a mere child I wrote some merely childish verses about the buttonwoods at Belle Vue. Then, at about sixteen, I began a sentimental poem about not lifting the veil from my heart. This last was never finished. But soon I wrote a long poem, in Scott's style, which was published, I think, in the 'Long Island Times.' Perfectly worthless. About this time I wrote a formless, boyish, worthless serial novel and printed it in the 'Bordentown Register.' Later, when I was, I suppose, eighteen or nineteen, early in the war, I wrote a poem called 'The Potomac — 1861.' It was, in fact, unconsciously built upon the model of 'In Memoriam,' and, while the facts were invented, the mourning woman I had in mind was my beloved friend Miss Bessy Harwood, whose lover had lost his life in the war. This was finished while I was working on the 'Newark Advertiser' and my superior sent it to 'Harper's Weekly' and it was printed there. He sent one or two other pieces of mine to the 'Weekly' which they accepted. I remember, after the publication anonymously of a very short, but to me portentous

poem, — perhaps it was 'Farewell,' — I was walking up Broadway, and I thought to myself, 'If these people knew that the author of that poem was among them, there would be something of a sensation.' I have never since felt so important.

"When the war was over, I was given a copy of Richard Grant White's 'Poetry of the War,' and as I looked through it, I said to myself, with a feeling of depression, 'The war is over, its poems collected, and nothing of mine has been found worthy of preservation.' Whereupon, to my amazement, I came, in the preface, upon a reference to my anonymous Potomac poem! Imagine my wild joy! I wrote to Richard Grant White, then in the Custom House, and told him that I had written the poem, and he answered very kindly and said that if there was a new edition, he would surely retain my poem. But it never seemed to me worth reprinting when, later, I came to get out books of my own. It was too imitative.

"While on the 'Newark Advertiser' I had charge, part of the time, of the make-up of the selections on the first page, and I always selected a poem for the top of the columns. I tried to have these appropriate to the moment, and sometimes, not finding what I wished, I would write a piece of verse for this place.

"Along about this time I wrote several indifferent poems, publishing most of them; but I think only one of these has seemed worthy of reprinting, and that is 'A Word Said in the Dark,' which was set to


music by the elder Huss. Perhaps, however, the most 'promising' of those written while I was a newspaper man in Newark was a Keatsian piece to some girl who called the writer a 'poet' — I believe unpublished. I had some facility in verse-making, I suppose, by this time, for I remember sitting up one night in the office to write a long piece of verse, or doggerel, to serve as a 'Carrier's Address' for the 'Advertiser.' It was not worth the fees the carriers got upon its presentation to those whom they daily served; but they would have got the fees if it had been still worse. Before this, when living at Fair Haven, the doctors were met in convention at New Haven, and I wrote a silly pasquinade and fastened it to a tree just outside the cemetery. I watched the papers for days, and was grievously disappointed that there was no sign that the convention had been thrown into turmoil by the attack.

"While living in Newark I did a little reviewing on the 'Advertiser,' and occasionally took pains with a descriptive article. When ex-Minister to Sardinia William B. Kinney, father of Thomas T. Kinney, of the 'Advertiser,' came back to Newark with his wife, — the mother of the poet Stedman, — he, to my surprise, made inquiry as to the authorship of some descriptive articles by me. He said he noticed it on account of an unusual use of an adjective — I forget what adjective that was, for I should like to make my acknowledgments to it, as it brought me one of the

first pieces of encouragement in my literary career. Among the things I wrote with care was a notice of a book by Julia Ward Howe, whom I knew in Bordentown — a notice which at least pleased her. Stedman used to come out to Newark to see his relatives, and he 'took notice' of the 'newspaper boy,' I don't know on what occasion. But the writing I did with most concentration at this period was the introduction to the Poems of 'Clementine,' of which I have spoken before. Mrs. Mary Mapes Dodge helped me with this — gave me a lesson, in fact, in prose composition, and greatly encouraged me in prose writing.

"The shackles of expression were broken by the circumstance of my getting acquainted with Dante's 'Vita Nuova' (through Rossetti's translation) at the time that I met Helena de Kay. I began by imitating Rossetti's version of Dante's sonnets, but almost immediately imitation was lost in the necessity of direct utterance. At last I discovered — so I thought, and the discovery was an astonishing one to me — that I at least possessed what seemed then a perfectly natural and inevitable medium of expression — namely, verse; and a thousand things to say.

"There was no precocity in this; all along I felt the need of more thorough education. After my work on 'Scribner's' began, and before I was married, I took up the study of Latin again, — but I did not get very far. After my marriage I took some Italian lessons. And I have always had some system in my reading —



following the classics in English translation, and taking up, one after the other, the English poets.

“But when I once fairly began with the series afterwards called ‘The New Day,’ all obstacles vanished. Confidence took the place of timidity — a confidence somewhat impaired in mature years, and still later revived, largely through a growing acceptance and recognition on the part of lovers of poetry, and of the poets themselves — what I wrote appealing to greater numbers as time went on.”

CHAPTER II

THE NEW DAY

1872-1875

HERE, on the threshold of his active life in New York, in the dawn of a New Day, full of promise and rich in fulfilment, I must take up the thread of my father's narrative. It is my desire to preserve as much as possible the informal and autobiographical character of these notes of his childhood and youth, to reconstruct in his own words the story of his life. He wrote many letters, though they were seldom long or discursive. Living in New York, at the focus of so many divergent interests, he saw and talked with his friends more often than he wrote to them. His thirty-eight years in New York were years of virtually unbroken activity, and in his truly "strenuous" life there was seldom time for rest and letter-writing. Yet, though his letters are comparatively few and often short, they are so full of his personality, so much more vivid than any words of description or comment, that I have used them wherever possible, supplementing them with notes from his occasional journals and with biographical extracts from his prose writings.

The chief source, however, both of insight and of knowledge, is the ten volumes of my father's verse.

In these poems he has written his life history, in them "he is himself, and writes from his own soul." About every five years he published one of these little volumes, "milestones," he called them, along his path. They are the expression of that inner flame which unified his life, which was on the surface so varied, so full of divergent and arduous labors. That life of editor, philanthropist, civic worker, writer, was essentially the life of a poet.

The "Register" and "Hours at Home"

In his own narrative, my father passes over with little comment the last few years of work, before he went to New York. They were, however, particularly hard years, especially the winter of 1869-70, when he, with Mr. Crane, started the "Newark Morning Register." Several years later, writing in the "Old Cabinet" of "Scribner's" he explains that "he did not do all the work himself; he simply wrote editorials and locals, solicited advertisements, set a little type occasionally, helped make up the form, wheeled it down the street to the pressroom, and before going to bed in the morning, superintended the sale of the paper by the newsboys."

While he was thus occupied in Newark, he was also editing "Hours at Home" in New York, to which magazine he had already contributed essays published in a department called "Leisure Moments." He wrote "body articles" as well as editorials, turn-

ing his hand, in true journalistic fashion, to biography, essay, or criticism as the need arose. To run these two enterprises necessitated much travelling between Newark and New York. I remember his account of an incident, related in after years with much laughter on his part, but which to those who heard it had a touch of something other than comedy. Very late one night, during this exhausting winter, he caught the train from New York, and falling asleep on the way, wakened to find himself in New Brunswick, well beyond his destination. Taking the train from there he fell asleep again, only to wake up in Jersey City. Again headed for Newark he resolved this time to keep awake, but the same thing happened, and he found himself a second time in New Brunswick.

It was perhaps fortunate that the "Register" was short-lived, for such a double strain could not have been borne much longer. In the spring of 1870 the paper was abandoned, covered more with debts than with glory. These debts hung over the young ex-partners for many years. They were finally all paid, however, to my father's intense relief, as he had what he called a "morbid" desire to have no indebtedness standing against him.

With the failure of the "Register" my father's connection with daily newspapers ceased. He was now sole editor of "Hours at Home," with the definite prospect of becoming managing editor of a more important magazine which Dr. J. G. Holland and Ros-

well Smith were planning to publish. His life-work in the "city of glorious days, of hope and labor and mirth," lay clearly before him.

"Think what unknown great things may be ours in the future," he wrote in an essay at about this time, "great griefs, great happinesses; what awakenings, what consummations, what grindings as of wheat made white and beautiful and fit for food. It is a strong, unseen friend — whom yet we trust — who shall lead us through sunshine and shade, through scenes of peace and places of sharp conflict, having always the end of our ennobling in view — and this surely shall be accomplished, if only we are true to ourselves."

In October, 1870, "Hours at Home" bowed itself off the stage, to make way for "Scribner's Monthly," the first number of which appeared in November. "At work on 'Scribner's Monthly,'" wrote my father in his journal. "Dr. Holland is very clever, as also is Mr. Smith. A. W. Drake will do our illustrations, or at least have charge of them." The new magazine soon made a place for itself. Its broad outlook, the variety of its subjects, its agreeable "make-up," and its numerous illustrations — an almost untouched feature at that time — won it immediate popularity. In the second number appeared the first of a series of essays called the "Old Cabinet." In this informal editorial department were reflected the varied topics of the day. Side by side appeared fragments of pure

imaginative description, bits of reminiscence, literary and artistic criticisms, or philosophic disquisitions. "In 'Scribner's' I wrote *all* the 'Old Cabinet,'" my father notes in a letter to one of his sons. "Some parts of it strike me now as being rather sentimental — not firmly knit; only later on in it I begin to get hold of prose expression in a way to satisfy myself. In fact I can seldom satisfy myself either in prose or in verse — though much more often in verse, for that seems to be more natural to me than prose." This department had at the time a real popularity, and its quiet humor, its old-fashioned discursive style, and its marked individuality still have a special charm. The atmosphere is redolent of Belle Vue, the old homestead at Bordentown, where the essays are supposed to be written, and they are particularly interesting because of their many passages of personal reminiscence.

Dr. Holland was not at first enthusiastic about the "Old Cabinet" department, fearing that it would not be successful, but in the end he was entirely won over to it. He said later that he read it with more interest than any other of the editorial departments, the "World's Work," "Culture and Progress," etc., partly on account of his interest in the author, but mainly for its intrinsic merits.

From the very beginning of their relations, Dr. Holland's interest in his young associate, as well as his warm personal affection for him, was most marked.

As early as 1870 he wrote: "I have great faith in you. I trust you as I would trust no other man of my acquaintance. That is a simple statement of the exact truth." And again, alluding to two articles in "Hours at Home," he says: "I thank you for calling my attention to the article on Charlotte Brontë. It tells the most for and of you of anything I have seen. But I knew you pretty well without reading these things — better, probably, than you knew me, because I have been quietly and very earnestly studying you. Let me be very frank and say that I have great faith in your talent and in your special adaptation to the work in which you are engaged. Let me say, too, that I like you, and I desire that you may win something which shall be of great value to you in life, by your connection with 'Scribner's Monthly.'"

"August 11, 1870.

"I am indebted to you for a copy of Mrs. Howarth's poems with your own beautiful and touching preface. . . . I am curiously impressed with your part of the volume, as compared with hers. It seems as if she were a young woman, while your work is that of an old man. You must have had a peculiar experience and discipline, for you have not a particle of the literary incontinence of youth. To use the words of the delicious Artemus, 'you do not slop over.'"


Dr. Holland not only expressed in such words as these his confidence in my father's ability, but also,

by leaving in his hands virtually the entire management of the magazine, he proved his reliance on the judgment of the younger man. In founding the magazine Dr. Holland and Mr. Smith were inspired by the highest ideals. "When they began their work," wrote Mr. Cable in his sketch of Roswell Smith, "there was in our country a distance, an estrangement, between culture and religion, between author and preacher, artist and common people, scientist and Bible student, that is now not easily realized. To remove that gulf, to draw these elements, by a kind and faithful energy, nearer to one another, was recognized as one large article of the magazine's great commission." Inspired by these ideals it remained for the younger men, my father, Mr. R. U. Johnson, and Mr. A. W. Drake, to put them into actual practice. That their efforts were not unsuccessful was proved by the rapidly growing popularity of the magazine, as well as by its development and improvement. Dr. Holland was well satisfied with its progress and with the work of his managing editor. He was always generous in his praise and encouragement, and gave my father his first "decoration," by presenting him, on an occasion of general jubilation, with a gold watch, inscribed, "Scribner's Monthly to the Old Cabinet, Oct. 22, 1872."

Although the winter of 1871-72 was one of hard work and great responsibility, my father enjoyed intensely, as he always did, his intercourse with his

friends, and the closer contact his work was giving him with the artistic and literary people of New York. It was through one of these friends, Helen Hunt, that he met Miss Helena de Kay. The editorial rooms of "Scribner's Monthly," then at 654 Broadway, was the scene of this meeting, so momentous for the two young people. It took a lifetime of active service and the full power of his poetic gift for my father adequately to express the effect of this event upon him. No one who knew him even slightly, no one who has read so much as one small volume of his verse, can fail to appreciate how intimate and vital were the results of this new influence.


At the time of their first acquaintance, Helena de Kay was studying painting at Cooper Union in New York, and there were frequent opportunities for meeting. There was a peculiar fitness in this friendship: the poet and the artist had much in common, and much, also, that each could give the other. From her grandfather, the poet Joseph Rodman Drake, my mother had inherited the flame of that "fire divine" which in her found expression in painting. With her family traditions, her familiarity with European literature, her knowledge and appreciation both of art and music, she opened new fields of interest and enjoyment to her eager "comrade." Together they went to concerts and art exhibitions, they listened to lectures, read poetry and studied Dante, with an ever-increasing pleasure and intimacy.



My father's letters of the following winter are full of talk of George MacDonald, then on a lecturing tour in America. The personality of this man made a deep impression on all who came into contact with him. "He has more of the spirit of the Christ than any man I ever met," Edward Eggleston said of him. When he finally left in the spring of 1873, the friendship between the two men, who were, in many ways, not so unlike, had grown very deep and warm. The little remembrances, spoken of in the following letter, are still in my father's "treasure box," and MacDonald's affectionate letters, covering many years, attest the strength and duration of their friendship. The day the MacDonalds sailed, my father wrote: —

"May 25, 1873.

"You thought of my sorrow in parting from them the night before? But it was not 'pain' — I never so easily parted with beings that were dear to me — I suppose it was because it was *not* parting. I loved them both so growingly — they got to be daily — towards the last, so much more to me — the whole thing seemed so rounded and complete—that though I broke down as I had no idea of doing, there was nothing at all hopeless about it—and one can stand anything but that. I'll tell you about some exquisite little remembrances they gave me at the last, when I get a chance—and some of the sacred things they showed me — perhaps some of the things they said."



Another pleasure that the two friends shared during this winter of awakenings and revelations, was the "discovery" of the "Rubáiyát" of Omar Khayyám. "Did you know," my father wrote later, "that I was one of the first in this country to be interested in Omar Khayyám? I saw it in manuscript, copied by Helena de Kay from the copy in the possession of John La Farge. I brought it to the attention of a publisher (not Scribner) who dealt in translated works, but he did not take it." He notes elsewhere that "these marvellous quatrains were the litany — the tragic undertone to our courtship."

The two years that followed his meeting with Helena de Kay was a period of intense and transforming emotion in the poet's inner life. The fire in which were fashioned the love sonnets of the "New Day," must have been great indeed: "a few months ago," he wrote in May, 1873, "I had not one strong, definite aim or assurance as to my art. To-day I feel a mastery such as I never expected to feel, — and which gives in me a promise of power and accomplishment which astonishes myself."

The first published expression of this power and promise was contained in a group of sonnets which appeared in "Scribner's" for November, 1873. Before this he had occasionally printed songs and lyrics in the "Old Cabinet" and in various newspapers, but usually had not signed them. This group was his first important one, his first mature and purposeful

production. Edmund Clarence Stedman, whose position as an older poet and as a literary critic gave his words weight, wrote upon reading them this affectionate and enthusiastic letter:—

“September 6, 1873.

“MY DEAR WATSON:—

“You need no praise, for the man who can write such pure poetry is a law unto himself. You know that hitherto whenever I have said anything to encourage you, (you have perhaps been sometimes encouraged by my sympathy at least,) I have not failed to mingle it with technical criticism, if I saw the slightest cause.

“Nothing of the latter can enter into my present note, for to save my life, I can find nothing to ‘criticize’ in this exquisite page of verse. At last you are writing flawlessly and have shown the soul of an artist in perfecting yourself and biding your time. Certainly no American ever has written six consecutive love sonnets to compare with these. They give me great delight, and will delight every poet who reads them. They are wholly your own, by that shade of difference—your own personal flavor—which makes them unlike the work of your masters: Petrarch, Mrs. Browning, Rossetti, etc. I wish I might have written them. Some fortunate coincidence of art, study, youth, being a poet and *being in love* have come together to produce them,—and neither I nor

any other poet can equal them. I especially like the 3d, 5th and 6th. ['Likeness and Unlikeness,' 'My love for thee doth march like armèd men,' 'Thy lover, love, would have some nobler way.'] The last two in structure are *superb*. And what I particularly am gratified with, is that you are rejecting now the oddity and obscurity I have sometimes 'cried out' at with regard to some of your verse. You don't need any factitious help of that sort, as I have always told you, and this beautiful poetry proves it."

These were the sonnets of "The New Day" the happy dawn of which was now at hand. In February, 1874, his engagement was announced, and on the following 3d of June he was married. The wedding took place at the home of the bride's family, Kaywood, Staten Island. A few days later in a local paper, the "Mount Holly Mirror," this kindly and amusing notice appeared: "Our young friend, R. Watson Gilder, formerly of Bordentown, more recently on the editorial staff of the 'Newark Daily Advertiser,' and now managing editor of 'Scribner's Monthly,' was married on the third inst., to Miss Helena de Kay, of Staten Island. Mr. Gilder's brief life has been so full of good deeds for others, we are happy to note this diversion in the interest of his own happiness and comfort."

Helen Hunt, now Mrs. Jackson, who had brought these two together, sent from her Western home a congratulation to



MR. AND MRS. GILDER
At the time of their marriage

"Them that do Rejoice."

"All yesterday our sky was cold and gray;
A misty wall of cloud hid from our sight
The mountain-tops: the plains stretched cold and white,
And snowflakes floated slowly down and lay
Like funeral flowers about the pallid day.
Sudden at noon, the sky to south grew bright,
Turned blue, was radiant in full sunny light.
Beneath our clouds we sat and looked away
Into this glowing south till sunset.

So

Into my life's gray calm to-day there fell
Message that two I loved had come to know
The one great earthly joy no words can tell.
Dear Hearts, I think light from your south will flow
To me until the tolling sunset-bell."

H. H.

Colorado Springs.

There is a charming daguerreotype of my father and "his beautiful madonna-like wife" taken shortly after their marriage. My father, slender and dark-haired, did not change very greatly as he grew older. He turned gray, of course, his moustache becoming quite white before his fine dark hair, cut always a little longer than the average, was even touched with age. But his eyes, large and deep brown in color, which dominated his strongly modelled face, changed not at all. He had extraordinary eyes — unforgettable.

"The gentleness of old Italian skies
The strength of his beloved New England hills
The eagerness of childhood and the charm
Of dawn, all mingled in those radiant eyes." ¹

¹ From a poem about my father by William Lee Corbin, written November 22, 1909.

For their honeymoon the bride and bridegroom travelled all the way from Staten Island to New York. They dated their letters from various points on an imaginary trip, ending at Niagara Falls, but actually they went no farther than 103 East Fifteenth Street, New York. This little house, which was to be their home for the next fifteen years, had been originally a stable, but was now transformed into a studio.

"The Studio itself is a beautiful one," wrote the bride only a few days after their installation, "with great shelves for casts and books, and nails for everything. R.'s two pictures hang in the place of honor near the head of Dante by Giotto. Mr. Moran sent R. a hammock, and it hangs across one corner of the room with a beautiful leopard skin below it, and by the sofa is a smaller rug. Edith's china and Mr. Stedman's glass are all upstairs until my china closet is ready, and in the middle of the handsome mahogany table stands a bowl Mrs. Holland sent *me*. Mr. and Mrs. MacDonald gave me a queer and very pretty old silver chatelaine with a silver locket containing the hairs of all 13! and in the patch-box a silver snake — a ring for R. W. G."

Mr. R. R. Bowker sent them a swinging censer full of flowers for which were written the following lines — in acknowledgment and thanks: —

"My friend doth chide himself for this
That he no fragrant verses brings
To deck the death of my despair.
But where yon brazen censer swings

Its rose-sweet incense through the air,
O there no lack of singing is."

It is the "Old Cabinet," however, that gives the most complete description of the new home: —

"So we found a nook in the very centre of the city. If you should stretch telegraph wires from each of the principal points of interest to the one on the opposite side of the town, we could intercept all the messages. We are within two blocks of eight hotels, three concert halls, two public monuments, and one savings bank. We are within one door of the central square of the city; five minutes' walk of the great dry-goods stores; five minutes' walk from some of the best and some of the worst restaurants in the world. The most noted and noisy street in America is hardly a stone's throw from our front gate. I suppose I need not mention such minor conveniences as butchers, bakers, and candle-stick makers, though really there is little need for the latter, as there is a kind of match box, in imitation bronze, somewhat in the form of a vase, and which with a little wadding can be made to hold a candle quite steadily, and is much prettier and cheaper than the ordinary article. (P.S. The base makes, also, an excellent extinguisher — if you have another candle.)

"So you see there is nothing to be desired in the way of nearness to anything; though I forgot to say that the horse-cars pass very close by. There is a cabstand over there by the monument, and the barber

is actually next door. In fact there is a gate leading from his flower garden to ours, which, in some respects, is the greatest convenience of all, as you may see from the following verses: —

“Two people once lived in a loft,
 Whose names were Confucius and Kitty,
 And their friends with anxiety, oft,
 Shook their heads and exclaimed, ‘What a pity!’
 And they asked them such questions as ‘Can
 You keep dry in your loft when it showers?’
 The reply to which constantly ran:
 ‘The barber takes care of the flowers!’

“Then their friends became sad and perplexed,
 And declared it was really alarming;
 But they smiled and they said, ‘Why, we’re next
 To the moon and the stars, and it’s charming.
 For although when the weather is hot
 We pass a few tropical hours,
 The toasting is quickly forgot,
 While the barber takes care of the flowers!


“‘Though we breakfast on marmalade tea,
 And dine on whatever is handy,
 Keeping house is no trouble, for we
 Can live nicely on lemons and candy.
 Though we boast neither camel’s-hair shawls,
 Nor coaches, nor turrets, nor towers,
 ‘Neath our loft are five beautiful stalls,
 And the barber takes care of the flowers!’”

The young couple spent all that summer in town, until in September is recorded a “wedding journey” to Milton-on-the-Hudson, the home of Mary Hall-ock Foote the novelist, my mother’s dear and life-long friend, whom they had often visited in the days



before their marriage. Their income was, indeed, too slender to warrant a longer trip or a more protracted holiday. They lived on the simplest possible scale, as they had not only to support themselves, on my father's salary, but to contribute to the support of his mother's family. The purchase of each new piece of furniture was, therefore, an exciting and delightful event. "I feel quite set up," writes the young housekeeper to Mrs. Foote. "I have some new furniture (second-hand)! The comfort of having a bureau and a wardrobe is greater than I ever supposed, and my bedstead is very pretty — mahogany and old-fashioned. With a carpet, and R.'s pretty bureau my corner looks quite palatial!"

The Studio on Fifteenth Street very quickly became the gathering-place for a group of young artists and authors, many of whom subsequently won an honorable rank in their professions. Here, in the simplest setting, but in an atmosphere of warmest hospitality and appreciation, people of all sorts and conditions found a congenial meeting-ground. It was not alone the circumstance of my father and mother being themselves artists that brought them so many and such varied friendships, but because they possessed to an unusual degree a power of sympathetic understanding which drew every type of person to them. "If I had my choice among all men," wrote H. H. Boyesen, the Swedish novelist, to my father, "I would choose you as the shepherd of my soul. I never



found a nature more thoroughly sympathetic than yours — unless it be your wife's."

"You must never forget this of the Gilders," Walt Whitman told his biographer, "that at a time when most everybody else in their set threw me down they were nobly and unhesitatingly hospitable. The Gilders were without pride and without shame — they just asked me along in the natural way. It was beautiful — beautiful. You know how at one time the church was an asylum for fugitives — the Church, God's right arm fending the innocent. I was such an innocent and the Gilders took me in."

Among the friends who came in these early days were La Farge and Saint-Gaudens, Will Low, Stanford White, Joseph Jefferson, Madame Modjeska, and many others. The young couple kept a journal during these first years, in which they wrote in turn. The narrative is diversified by sketches by my mother, and poems by my father. Here the names of these friends appear again and again, and the beginnings of many lifelong friendships are recorded.

These pages are from the journal, beginning, in my father's hand, in August, 1874: —

"How many lives we live at once, of which a journal gives little idea — the life of the book one is reading, of business and its associations and passing interests, of one's main aims in art or life, of one's family, of one's friends, of one's love which runs through all.

"Then there is the life of the world which one sees in the newspapers and which sometimes occupies nearly half of the time of thought. I have just finished 'Purgatorio' (Longfellow) — I think it has given me more thrill than 'Inferno.' You have a sense of coming every now and then into a great sound of chanting — shall I ever forget the mountain that trembled! I feared 'Purgatorio' would disappoint me, but it rises as it should rise, and now I have little fear of 'Paradiso.'"

October, 1874, my mother writes: "The Charles Dudley Warners were here a week ago. They were perfectly enchanted with the Studio and Mr. Warner sat down in the hammock and said: 'I am not going to Egypt!' He said to me — 'I like you. I think you are the nicest girl I ever saw!' 'Why, Charley!' said Mrs. Warner. 'Well, it's nineteen years to-day since we were married and I have n't [seen a nicer] since.' Tuesday Mr. Stedman was here in the evening. He praised my things very highly and said that R.'s sonnets were the best series in America. He spoke just as he should about La Farge and was very funny and clever."

Later my father writes, November 20: —

"Joe Jefferson was in the office to-day. He came in answer to my note and made an appointment to come home with us after the play, Tuesday night. He was much interested in the pictures and was extremely intelligent on the subject of art. He spoke



of the time I played as ghost and villager with him in Newark. That was very jolly, I could study him near, and we talked between the acts. 'Who's your barber?' was all I had to say.

"Jefferson always speaks modestly. He said, when I nagged him about playing something else, that the play of Rip was greater than he—that is, its reputation was. He said that when he played other things his friends came to see him, but the crowd stayed away. And yet they say he is delicious in other characters also."

"Friday, November 27.

"The day after Thanksgiving I went around after the play to Booth's and brought Jefferson to the Studio. We thought we were more impressed with his playing that night than ever; he seemed greater. But this Friday night we had him to ourselves for two hours and a half.

"He said he thought Salvini the greatest tragic actor he had ever seen. He did not like the death-scene in 'Othello,' however, where Salvini curls up like a beast. Art is not imitation of nature, but built upon nature. There is a process of elimination and idealization. There should be nothing offensive as is that part of Othello; he could teach any ignorant fellow to do that, but the great artist should know better.

"He believed that you actually got some real substance from your audience when you were acting —

and gave a real substance back to it. It would exhaust him beyond measure to play his part without an audience. But with an audience he is not at all tired. The secret of acting is to keep the heart warm and the head cool.

"He stayed till half-past one! He brought some new photographs of the ancient Rip, and asked us about coming out and spending three or four days with him in the summer."

Another group of friendships and associations full of stimulating interest to both my father and mother, was formed on their first trip to Cambridge, Massachusetts, in the second summer after their marriage. All the people they met there were not strangers. William and Henry James were old friends of my mother, who had known them in Newport in her girlhood. They made the journey with Mrs. Lathrop, Hawthorne's daughter, and went with her afterwards to Mount Washington, in the Berkshires, where they spent several months.

In the journal for July, 1875, my mother writes: "Richard went to see Lowell and Longfellow; Lowell had called on us when we were out. We took tea at the Jameses, who are all the same. Norton's Woods were beautiful. I went there to sketch and met Lowell walking along with his finger in a book. He was perfectly delightful — so sweet (almost) and genial. We saw him twice. The first thing Longfellow said to me was that he had heard of our house

and thought it must be charming — that he was always pleased to hear of houses where people carried out their own ideas and did not go by the general type. His own is beautiful. Emerson — of all these people — impressed us as the genuine child of genius. His profile was enchanting — the brow and nose and chin firm — the lips singularly delicate and with the most exquisite, refined and lovely expression."

"The New Day"

During all the first year of their married life, my father had been thinking of gathering the poems he had written to my mother, into a small volume, arranged so as to form a definite sequence.

"After the idea came to me," he wrote, "of arranging these poems under the title of 'The New Day,' with prelude and introduction describing a dawn on the ocean shore, H. and I camped out for twelve days on Fire Island Beach. In the morning I would wrap myself in a blanket and, lying on the sand dune, watch the rising sun. One morning this exact dawn came — bird and all."

From the journal, October, 1874: —

"I have been writing the prelude ever since we returned from camping and have finished it for the present to-day."

Later: "We went down on July 3d to Sandy Point and pitched our tent on the beach till Tuesday morning. We saw three sunrises on the ocean. I wanted



RICHARD WATSON GILDER ABOUT 1875



to freshen and carry on my 'impressions' for the third interlude. The book is all in type except that. H.'s part is exquisite — I wish I were as sure of my sonnets as I am of her roses."

Finally comes the entry: "The book was published October 16, 1875. It was great fun bringing home, days before, first the dummy, second the uncovered copy, and third the book! H. found two new poems, lately written and kept from her with great presence of mind! 'O sweet wild roses,' and the sonnet 'O highest, strongest, sweetest woman-soul.' It was a jolly surprise. The 'Evening Post' notice was most kind, but I read it with pain, as I did all the first ones. It did n't seem as though any one had the right to write about it at all — especially out of place all dis-praise sounded! The 'Graphic's' ill-natured remarks took the buoyancy out of me.

"I sent a copy to Longfellow and Lowell. Longfellow replied at once with his 'Masque of Pandora and Other Poems' just out. I had seen the book and was delighted with the sonnets — so I wrote the day his book came acknowledging its receipt in a sonnet 'T was Sunday evening as I wandered down.'

"The press has noticed the book most cordially — the adverse criticisms have been so stupid that they amount to nothing. In fact, so far, there seems to be little useful advise or hint in the criticisms. They are mainly valuable as showing how different kinds

of people take the book. It is selling slowly, and promises to be a moderate 'business success.'"

The following letter from Lowell came a few days later: —

"ELMWOOD, 15th December, 1875.

"As the sight of you young lovers under my friend Norton's familiar pines transported me for a moment to a more innocent garden of Boccaccio, and prettily renewed my own youth and forward-looking days for me, so your little book has given me a pleasure the same in kind though more poignant in degree. I cannot praise it better than by saying that as I read it I kept murmuring to myself 'it dallies with the innocence of love like the old age.' Here and there I might shake my head (gray hairs, you know, have a trick of setting our heads ashake) but nearly all I like, and I like thoroughly. Your book is too subtle for many, but the sense of lovers is finer and they will find it out. You will be the harmless Galeotto between many a dumb passion and itself.

"But I know you are grumbling to yourself, 'Why does he praise my verses and say nothing about her illustrations?' I could not help liking their grace and fancy. They seem to me like flowers a lover had given his mistress and begged again after she had worn them in her stomacher till they had caught some enchantment from their happy destiny. I thank you both for a great deal of pure pleasure that will last — as only pure pleasures do."

The press notices, with only a few exceptions, were, indeed, remarkably appreciative and laudatory. "I must congratulate you heartily upon the deserved success of 'The New Day,'" wrote Stedman. "I certainly don't remember any first book of poetry which has had so extended notice — Miller's excepted, and he had a European endorsement. You certainly are not overlooked, and have made an impression."

From among the many clippings of this time, I take the following as typical of the attitude of the more thoughtful reviewers: "The discovery of a new poet in the realms of literature is about as notable a thing as the discovery of a new star in the science of astronomy," said the "Boston Journal" of October 20, 1875. "It is with sincere satisfaction, therefore, that we record the advent of a poet whose first book of verse is not only full of promise, but full of fruition, and places him at once out of the list of minor singers into the ranks of the great bards, whose songs are for other generations as well as this."

"The power of these poems is in their spiritual perception and in the depth and clearness of feeling which make their own music," said the "New York Evening Post." "The author has an exquisite ear, an eye capable of intense and familiar gaze upon the beautiful and remote mysteries of the soul, and a heart gifted with the power of complete absorption in the realities which he sees face to face."

One of the adverse criticisms, based upon a complete

misunderstanding of the meaning of the poems, drew from Edward Everett Hale this indignant letter:—

“I have just read in the ‘London Spectator’ their notice of your poems. It made me so angry that I cannot help saying so to you. Indeed, it reminded me immediately of some of the earlier notices of Tennyson. . . .

“These men write of you as though the first essential of poetry (without which it has no right to be) were not sweetness — of flow, rhythm, and everything else. Admitting that your poems surpass almost all writers in these they admit too much — to rule you out afterwards of a very, very high circle. Pray be sure, dear Mr. Gilder, that it is better to please many readers than it is to write what penny-a-liners cannot find fault with. Your poems have given us here very great pleasure and I think you will find that thousands of better people say the same.”

That which speaks perhaps as highly as anything else for the artistic value of this first book, is the fact that with only slight changes of order, and occasionally of phrase, these sonnets have survived the numerous revisions to which my father subjected his work in after years. Only one poem was omitted from the complete edition of his verse published in 1908, when the poems passed for the last time under the critical eye and ruthless “blue pencil” of their author. “In the first edition of ‘The New Day,’” my father notes on the margin of a volume of the “Complete Poems,” “there were things that my taste later

disapproved, so in the following editions I not only made changes, but wholesale omissions. In this edition a certain acquired virtuosity has enabled me to correct and reclaim omitted poems."

In the second edition of "The New Day" (1880) there are several of these omissions and corrections. "The Riddle of Lovers" and "At the Play" have disappeared for good from its pages. The latter is the single poem which was never republished. The former seemed to be misleading. No one has ever guessed the riddle correctly, and yet its meaning is simple enough. It was suggested by the same scene as that which inspired the sonnet beginning: —

"Of other men I know no jealousy
Nor of the maid that holds thee close — ah, close!"

It is the maid's embrace which is the secret of the riddle, and nothing more mystic or elusive! "The Dark Room," also omitted from later editions, symbolizes the obstacle which the poet meets with in his "Lady's" devotion to a life given up to art.

In addition to its poetic value, this first small volume has an artistic value of its own. The expressive and sympathetic drawings by "H. de K." scattered through its pages add greatly to its charm. It is bound in purple cloth — the cover decorated with a peacock-eye, symbolic of the rising sun of this "New Day." "My beloved first-born of books," my father called it, and in outer and inner beauty, surely it is worthy of that place.

CHAPTER III

THE STUDIO

1875-1881

BEFORE the beginning of the year of 1876 the little household at 103 East Fifteenth Street had become a real family. "On December 12 the nameless child came crying into the Studio at half-past nine in the evening." This was Marion, the first-born, the "rarest spirit I have ever known," her father called her. She seemed, indeed, too other-worldly for this earth, for she lived less than a year, bringing with her death the first and perhaps the deepest sorrow that these two ever had to bear together. Writing of this loss to John Burroughs, my father said: —

"I am glad you had some acquaintance with little Marion, whom we buried the other day: such a brief life seems to take such frail hold on the memory of mankind, and yet, I never knew a person who impressed me more with his or her individuality. I realized, through that child, that the soul is born at its fulness. All that is done after the beginning is to add to knowledge through daily and hourly experience. Certainly I did not know that the breaking off of so young a life could bring, as it were, a death to the living; or, what is the same thing, a birth into an utterly different state of existence."



INTERIOR OF NO. 103 EAST 15TH STREET



Later, writing in the journal — after a long lapse he exclaims: —

“How barren every record like this is. There is no idea given here of the life we had some little time before Marion died. Marion won her way with both of us. We had an exquisite delight in her, a sort of passion for her. She was the most perfect and delightful being that either of us had ever seen. She seemed as fine as a spirit, and there was a morality and purity about her nature that made itself felt in a strong and curious way. It seemed to us that we had never seen any child like her, and many other persons said this too — women who had children of their own used to tell H. that this was the most beautiful child they had ever seen. There was no unhealth in her, but she was as fine as a disembodied spirit. When she was being washed I would hold her naked in my hand — high in the air. ‘In the embers shining bright’ — the first baby-song — was made for her as she was lying on my hand, with her head up like a turtle — staring into the Franklin on the north side of the Studio.”

The record of the rest of this sad year I find again in the journal: —

“I promised to let Johnson have his own way with vacations this year on account of his happy marriage. So my real vacation was saved till fall — two weeks only, in which the Centennial was also to be done. So we made Belle Vue our headquarters.

It was September, quiet and sad, with gleams of inspiration from natural beauty. We went often to Marion's grave. We left an evergreen wreath there. This is one of the places she was to know. Only her lifeless body was ever here, and yet that has made the old house a holier and dearer place. We will plant an oak tree in the yard for her — and we will mourn her unreconciled till we get her again — if there is any such possibility in the mysterious universe. H. began two pictures of me, and we walked to town, and around the hilltops and one day to Thorntown."

Not long after this the birth of a son brought them again a certain peace and happiness, though to the last my father mourned the little Marion. The new arrival, however, was a delight to him, for he had a particularly intense feeling for little babies. The younger and the more helpless they were, the more he delighted in them. He would sit for hours in fascinated interest and amazement, and he had very little patience for the father who did not appreciate the ever new and astonishing miracle of babyhood.

Many were the amusing shifts to which the small household was put in order to accommodate this new member. One of the stories I have heard my father tell, I find in the journal at the time of its occurrence. It is characteristic of the friendly and neighborly atmosphere of the New York of that day, as well as of the absurd situations in which the young couple often found themselves: —

"The next day after the baby was born, Mary the cook went into the carpenter's to get scales — but they had only a poor thing, which I would not use. So she went over to the hotel and the head waiter said he had nothing in the house, but in his enthusiasm and interest he said he would try to find something and bring it over. I looked up when Mary told me this and there was the head waiter of the Union Square, with two assistants in white aprons — bringing in a large platform scales through the gate. On this the baby was weighed—six pounds avoirdupois—as near as we could make out. They had thoughtfully added to the weighing power of the machine 50 pounds, by means of a balance weight — bringing its capacity up to 100 LBS!"

The new baby flourished and grew strong, and so the household at the Studio revived with something of its old spirit, its usual interests and occupations.

The Society of American Artists

My mother began again to paint. The sketching club of which she was a member resumed its informal meetings at the Studio. My mother's work, both at home and at the Art Students' League which she had helped to found, brought her into contact with many of the young artists of the day. It was natural, therefore, that these young men and women, especially those just returning from Europe, should find, as Will Low expressed it, "in the little house on 15th

Street an oasis in the first few years of our return to our desert home, as it appeared to us in comparison to the flowery regions of art whence we came."

The attitude of the Academy of Fine Arts did much to heighten this feeling of "desertness," and in consequence to foster discontent among the young artists. The Academy was so conservative that there was no possibility of progress or change under its influence. The exhibition in the spring of 1875, from which almost all the younger artists were excluded, was stigmatized in the newspapers as "common-place" and retrogressive. The rejected artists decided to have an exhibition of their own, and on April 19 "the conspirators met at the Studio and Mr. Lathrop was appointed a Committee on Exhibition under La Farge — who came in and stayed an hour or two after midnight." The result of the conspiracy was the announcement by Cottier and Company that there were now on exhibition in their rooms at No. 144 Fifth Avenue, "the works of some of the most noted as well as some of the younger artists of New York and Boston." "The exhibition," so runs a contemporary newspaper notice, "presents one of the most important art movements of the day. The pictures exhibited are mainly by certain young artists whose work is not congenial to the spirit which controls the Academy and who find no sympathy or encouragement there." The notice mentions some of the exhibitors, — La Farge, W. H. Hunt, Thayer,

Helena de Kay, and others, ending with the remark that "although it is a collection full of beauty and interest it is suggestive no less of better things to come."

The discontent increased in the years that followed, until in the spring of 1877 it reached its culmination. "Before the young artists went away for the summer," my father notes in his journal, "we started at the Studio a new Art Association, called temporarily the American Art Association." In a letter written in 1907 to Mr. Homer Saint-Gaudens and used by him in the "Reminiscences" of his father, my father describes the founding of the Society: —

"I have often said that the Society of American Artists was founded on the wrath of Saint-Gaudens. You know Mrs. Gilder was a student in those days, first at the Cooper Institute and then at the Academy School. Later she belonged to the new Art Students' League, which was a revolt from the Academy School. Just then the old Academicians were carrying things with a pretty high hand, so I spoke to a few of the younger men of our American 'renaissance' about starting a new organization. When I mentioned it to your father he said that the time had not quite come. But one day, — just thirty years ago last Saturday, — he rang the bell at the iron gate at 103 East Fifteenth Street. It was noon and I was at home for lunch. I ran down to the gate and I tell you there

was a high wind blowing! Your revered father was as mad as hops! He declared that they had just thrown out a piece of sculpture of his from the Academy exhibit, and that he was ready to go into a new movement. I told him to come around that very evening. We sent, in addition, for Walter Shirlaw and Wyatt Eaton, and the Society of American Artists was that night founded by Walter Shirlaw, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Wyatt Eaton, and Helena de Kay, your humble servant acting as secretary, though Wyatt Eaton was the nominal secretary. Clarence Cook, the critic, was present though not as a member."

During the winters that followed, the Studio was the scene not only of the meetings of the newly founded Society of American Artists, and of the sketching club, but also of many informal and friendly gatherings, usually on Friday evenings. These Friday evenings became, as time went on, an institution in New York. "To the hospitable welcome of this modest dwelling," writes Mr. Low in his "Chronicle of Friendships," "every one who came to New York in those days, bearing a passport of intellectual worth, appeared to find his way." One of those who brought such a passport was the young Polish actress, Helena Modjeska. Like many of the friendships formed in those early days, this one lasted, in growing pleasure and intimacy, to the end of Mme. Modjeska's life. In my father's journal I find the following description of an evening in the autumn of 1876: —

"On Sunday evening, October 20th, we were at Modjeska's Gilder reception, as they call them — nobody there but Bozenta, Prowpouski, Modjeska, Jean, Tina, Mira,¹ H. and R. W. G.; also Weir and Sargent (managers). After Weir and Sargent had left, H. put her necklace around Madame's forehead with her silver bracelets hanging at the sides, and Madame fell on the floor in the attitude of Cleopatra. That was so fine that H. and she ran out into the other room to dress her up in full character. While they were gone the rest of us turned the room into a theatre — with bouquets at every seat. Jean made an opera glass of wine bottles and we all learned a Polish word from Bozenta. He gave me one that he said was specially poetic — and these words and bouquets we flung at her when she came, like a vision of beauty, into the room. She was astonished at the greeting in her own language. Then, not knowing 'Cleopatra,' she recited something else, in Polish, — we afterwards learned that it was Hagar addressing the Almighty — a Polish poem. Then she recited a passage from Corneille — 'Les Deux Horaces.' Then a speech of 'Camille.' These were exquisite — the last thrillingly beautiful, noble and tragic. Then she read a pathetic Polish patriotic poem. Such recitations and reading we had never heard — we, who cannot bear recitations and readings as a rule. It was great acting —

¹ Bozenta was Mme. Modjeska's husband and Prowpouski their cousin; "Jean, Tina, Mira," my father's sisters.

the play of expression in the face was subtle and most exquisitely beautiful, and the tragic part made the tears start. Such constant grace of expression in every pose, every line of limb. She had an audience who she knew would not only appreciate her but love her. At the Polish piece her husband and cousin cried. 'Ah!' she said, 'I have been too long away from my country.'"


On other pages of the journal are recorded some problems which came up during the course of the winter:—

"I went out in the morning to Edison's to see if we could not secure the magazine article on the electric light. They were not ready yet. The eyes of the world are on that fellow. He said 'Scribner's' was the best magazine in this world—he did n't know what they might have on Mars. 'All the magazines,' he said, 'are taking up live topics now. There's that old "North American" that used to have articles on G—d—ed Frithiof Sagas and Sanskrit novels, and now they are taking up modern things!' Edison is the most modern thing I know, scouting art and crying up utility and invention, and yet a poet in his way and as interesting, humanly, as a real poet, or a piece of the Parthenon."

"Summer of 1878.

"I talked with Dr. Holland about my 'Old Cabinet' writings the other day. He liked what I wrote about engravers, but thinks I am in danger of being limited. I tried to make him understand that I was

interested in plastic art as a part of life, a part of all art and a part of my own general culture. That I was not interested in it to the extent of making a specialty of it— that I never expected to write of it except incidentally, and paragraphically, and that I wrote about art in the 'Old Cabinet' because by hard thinking, observation, and study I had cracked the shell and was beginning to get at the kernel of it, and therefore could write more intelligently about it than could most people in the country — whereas on other subjects I felt there were many men who could write much better; — that if I were editor I would be the last man to neglect public, economic, etc., questions in the magazine, but would get specialists to write about them. That I *was* interested in other things and deeply moved by other things — and always had been; — that I expressed myself most intimately and confidentially in poetry and had never written about art in poetry; that so far as the magazine was concerned I stand for the art side especially in his mind, merely because I am 'in the movement.' Of course I could not explain that I was also interested in the literary side and that most of our good writers had come to the magazine through me, as well as nearly all the artists. Nor did I care to boast that I had suggested 'Home and Society' and a hundred other practical or public things — being sometimes met with the reply that the public did not care for these questions — and that this was a magazine chiefly for women."



This conversation was occasioned by my father's determination to give up the "Old Cabinet," as he found his purely editorial duties so exacting as to require all the strength and energy at his command. In answer to this proposition Dr. Holland wrote in August, 1875:—

"MY DEAR GILDER: I wish you could know with how tender a feeling I regard you, how fully I believe in you, how perfectly seated you are in my heart.

"There! I have simply obeyed the impulse excited by the writing of your name, and of course the above has nothing to do with this letter.

"In regard to relinquishing the 'Old Cabinet' except when you have something special to say in it, I make no objection. In the main, and lately particularly, it has been a very attractive feature of the magazine. I can see that it has been a good thing for you, too, and that its office in that regard is practically finished. You can and should do larger work, when you do any, and make more of your better thought. My feeling is that you should drop it without a word, so when you come to resume it you can resume it without a word.

"I bid the department good-bye with regret. I thank you for all it has done for the magazine and I congratulate you on all it has done for you."

In "Scribner's" for the following October appears the last "Old Cabinet" essay. As Dr. Holland suggested it was dropped without formality, although, as


matters turned out, it was never resumed. My father's next appearance in the magazine was on the main editorial page.

Even during these years of Dr. Holland's nominal control, my father was directing more and more the policy of the magazine. His influence was not limited to the literary and artistic side of the enterprise, but was active in many questions of business management and of general policy. In one matter particularly he carried into effect what was then a new idea of magazine morality, but one which has since become the accepted point of view of all reputable magazines. Up to this time it had not been thought questionable for a magazine to print among its regular contributions certain articles which were practically advertisements and which were paid for accordingly. The junior editor of "Scribner's" objected strongly to this arrangement, and, in spite of the fact that his chief could see nothing wrong in it, my father's opinion prevailed. The following letter from Dr. Holland gives his point of view on the subject: —

"September 18, 1878.

"DEAR GILDER: It is impossible for *you* to offend *me*. I know you too well and love you too much.

"I appreciate your feelings in the matter upon which you write, but I beg you to bear me witness that there is not an article in the back numbers of 'Scribner's' that is not squarely based on the merits of the



thing praised, and that there is not a word in them that I would not be willing to say editorially for nothing if I were writing about them at all.

"Having said as much as this, I freely acknowledge to you that I have great faith in your moral instincts. I don't think I would do wrong quicker than you if I could see it. I am inclined to think that your eye for a cracked thing is better than mine.

"One thing is certain: no money can come to me through arrangements of the character you criticize that will pay me for hurting your feelings, or the lowering of the moral standard of the smallest man in my employ. I shall certainly do as you ask me to do."

A marginal note in my father's handwriting says: "There were no more paid-for or assisted articles in the magazine after this."

"The Poet and His Master"

The year of 1878 was brought to a happy close by the publication of a second book, "The Poet and His Master." This little volume of only thirty-nine poems contained among others the ode beginning, "I am the spirit of the morning sea." It is the expression of all up-leaping joy and happiness, beauty and life, but was written, strangely enough, in a mood of deepest depression, soon after the death of little Marion. "Whistling," he said, "to keep up my courage." The sonnet on the sonnet, also included in this volume,

had been noticed on its publication in the "Old Cabinet" with the comment that "there has been nothing written about the sonnet half so good as this."


First European Journey

With whatever courage and energy my father met the business cares and worries, the private griefs and family responsibilities of these early years, the strain of sixteen years of uninterrupted work was beginning to tell on a constitution never too strong. A few months after the publication of "The Poet and His Master" it became evident that he must have a rest. In order really to get away from his work, he and my mother, and the baby, Rodman, then about two years old, went to Europe. Throughout his life my father's holidays were of this kind, forced upon him by the exhaustion of his energies and the collapse of his physical strength. It would be more accurate to describe them as illnesses than as holidays. He, however, never considered them as anything but delightful experiences. New sights and new people gave him the keenest pleasure, in no matter how serious a condition he might be. His enjoyment of Europe and of all Old World things was inexhaustible. He was ever a "passionate pilgrim" to those lands of wonder.

The party sailed in March, 1879, going first to London, then to Paris, and thence, by stages, southward to Italy. One of their stopping-places was Avignon in the south of France, where, as a com-

panion of their journey tells in a letter to some friends in America, "We made a great discovery — a 'nest' of Provençal poets, all living and writing here at Avignon." Their introduction to this poet-world was characteristically romantic. Straying one day into a little bookstore on the market-place, the "pilgrims" from the New World inquired the way to the home of Mistral, whose fame had already reached across the Atlantic. "Madame" looked up from her work among the dusty books, but instead of replying exclaimed in tones of exultation and delight — "Ah, Monsieur est poète!" "To us," my mother used to say, in telling the story, "who came from a land where to be a poet meant to be something one must hide and be ashamed of, this salutation seemed indeed a greeting from another world." The keeper of the shop turned out to be Mme. Roumanille, wife of the senior member of the poetic group, herself once queen of the society of poets, — the *Félibrige*, — and mother and mother-in-law of other queens and poets. The poet from America was welcomed with open arms by all these warm-hearted Provençaux. In the letter from which I have already quoted there is this description of some of the festivities at Avignon: —

"We had a most interesting day yesterday. The little company of poets ('*félibres*') have united in doing honor to our poet and H. They came, brought by their interpreter, M. Bonaparte-Wyse, a grandson of Lucien Bonaparte, to invite us to a '*félibrijado*'



— a meeting, a dinner, speeches, poems, songs, everything delightful. M. Wyse presided at dinner, with H. and the boy beside him; H. wearing a bunch of starry blue periwinkle, the flower of Provence, in her hair. Opposite to them sat M. Roumanille (founder of the School), with our poet beside him, and for my neighbor I had M. Mathieu, the oldest of the poets, called 'Le Poète des Baisers.' Two young men were on the other side: M. Gras and another whose name I do not recall. Each one has a device and a name by which he is known among the 'félibres' — one a 'cricket,' another a 'butterfly.'

"After dinner a cup of Chateau-neuf was passed, and every one in turn made a speech and gave a toast. We were loaded to embarrassment with compliments, and our own modest little speeches — through M. Wyse's interpretation — were transformed into flowers of sentiment.

"The dinner over, they led us up a dark old stairway, into a long hall, dimly lighted, at one end of which a candle-lit table was laid with coffee and delicious crystal-like cordials. The hall had been, years ago, a meeting-place of the Knights Templars; and there were still signs remaining of a little chapel there, set apart. Indeed, it all was like a little bit of the Middle Ages. After we had had our coffee they gave us their songs and poems: one of the younger men stood up while he sang a sort of troubadour march to battle, his voice ringing through the great dim hall.

M. Roumanille recited some Christmas verses, full of fine solemn tones; M. Mathieu, a little poem with the refrain 'Catoun! Catoun!' (little cat)—keeping time with his own airy gestures and waves of the hand as graceful as the lines. M. Wyse gave us some translations of Walt Whitman into Provençal verse. Madame Roumanille, too, repeated a poem for us—and our own poet brought some verses which he had written at Vacluse that afternoon and which H. read in their French translation. They gave us some choruses. Many of their voices were rich and musical. Then H. repeated for them those lines of Keats, beginning:—

'O for a draught of vintage, that hath been
Cooled a long age in deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sun-burnt mirth!'

— and although they could not understand the words they felt their wonderful melody."

The friendships begun so propitiously that summer in Provence did not end there. They continued throughout my father's lifetime, finding expression on his part in verses written to the "New Troubadours," in articles published in the magazine under his direction, and in a constant interchange of letters and books. On their part they expressed their affection and esteem by electing both my father and my mother to the Society of the *Félibrige*, an honor accorded to but few Americans. Miss Preston, who translated *Mistral's* "Mireo" into English, and Thomas A. Janvier,

and his wife, whose intimacy with the members of the *Félibrige* began when they went as "Ambassadors" from my father to the Poets of Provence, are among that limited number.

From Avignon the travellers went to Porto Fino. Leaving the boy there under the affectionate care of the George MacDonalds, they pursued their journey to Rome. One of the most interesting experiences of this first visit to the Eternal City was my father's meeting with Severn and his "discovery" of the life-mask of Keats, then unknown to all but a small group of Keats's admirers. In a prefatory note, written for an edition of Keats's "Odes, Sonnets and Lyrics," he describes his search for Severn: —

"I found the old man at last in his apartment at the Fountain of Trevi. I visited him twice and spent delightful hours in the company of him who had witnessed, close at hand, perhaps the greatest tragedy in English literature — the untimely death of Shakespeare's younger brother. There was something thrilling in the touch of the kindly hand that had ministered to the dying poet, and laid him away in his grave, and had written the simple story of those last tragic hours — a story one of the most moving in the sad chronicles of genius and mortality. He placed in my hands, for a few reverent moments, the original of his pathetic drawing of the dying boy.

"On the wall I was startled to see, for the first time, a life-mask of Keats's face. I begged him to tell me

where a copy could be obtained, and he said at a caster's near Charing Cross. Being in London later in the year, I found that the plaster cast shop had been removed some forty years before. But I persisted till I found where the mask could be had, and obtained two copies. This mask, which when I found it was already possessed by some of the London poets, has since become well known in both England and America. It is the most accurate and satisfying representation existing of the face of Keats. Severn was a cheery old man, whose devotion in youth to Keats, grew evidently out of his natural spirit of kindness no less than from a special and sincere sentiment of admiration and affection. This very devotion, continued in spirit throughout a long life, had brought him many friends, as well as official position, and had made his days brighter. Though apparently in good health at the time of my visit, and humorously boastful of the many years that his physician still promised him, Severn died within a few months of the time I met him, namely, on the 3d of August, 1879. At his son's request I took charge of the American end of the subscription for his interment, with a 'suitable commemorative stone.'"

From the journal

"On the 12th of May we left Rome. At Chiusi H. got off to go to Sienna and I kept on to Florence to get Rodman. On the left the most beautiful snow-

covered mountains we have seen — a rosy, glistening silver above the bright green of the near vines and hills and the rich purple of the distant foothills — mingling with the clouds, rising in peaks. It was like a vision of heaven, the sky was dark and lowering above. The most exquisite and miraculous thing I have ever seen in nature. The splendid view of Carrara had something of terror in it. This is all beautiful beyond words or imagination.”

They spent some months in Venice, where my mother's sister, Mrs. Arthur Bronson, was living. As the summer advanced, the weather became very hot. My father was ordered to Switzerland, to take a “cure” at Ragatz, but the experiment was not successful, partly because of the too exhilarating atmosphere of the place and partly because of my father's inevitable loneliness and homesickness when he was separated from his family. My mother and the boy soon rejoined him, and they travelled to Paris to consult the physicians there. The result of these interviews is given in the following letters: —

“PARIS, September 5, 1879.

“If I should not go home till spring, you must not think it is because I am dangerously ill. The fact is that my brain has been on an almost continuous strain for the past — how many years? I have been in a sort of a passion of excitement — trying to accomplish and really accomplishing one thing after the

other. The consequence is, I have the American disease of 'nerve exhaustion.' Dr. Beard has a Latin name for it. I could, Dr. Beard says, go back and work a little every day — then it would take years of the greatest care to get back anything like my old strength. Or I can stay away from the desk and get back a good deal of the old fire in the additional six months. I know he is right. Dr. Franco absolutely forbids my returning to America till the spring, but both say that by care I will come out all right. Dr. Beard says he envies me my constitution and that I will 'live to be 90.' I write this so that no one may be alarmed. I am still weak, but have made some gain, and this gain ought not to be lost by going to work too soon."

They went, therefore, to Shanklin, Isle of Wight, for several months, and then, early in the winter, to London, where in spite of business cares and continued strain my father's health gradually improved. His letters at this time are for the most part filled with details of magazine work, the securing of important articles, the interviewing of possible contributors. All the while he kept closely in touch with the New York office. "He works tremendously hard for an invalid," writes my mother from London, "running about all day sometimes. He is not looking well and we are going down to the MacDonalds' for a few days."

Notwithstanding much labor and little health, his stay in London was full of pleasure and interest,

as also was a second trip to the Continent, including a visit to Paris and a delightful journey with my mother to the Barbizon region and to Chartres.

To Jeannette L. Gilder

LONDON, January 9, 1880.

I did not expect to know so many people here, but every one has been most unexpectedly kind and hospitable, and we are getting to know lots of queer and lots of nice men, women, and children. I am getting along remarkably well in health, though too much work (and I have been on the go for "Scribner's" for weeks now) pulls me down.

I have lunched with Gosse and Austin Dobson and tea'd with Gosse, where we met Miss Robinson the young poetess, and Mrs. Alma Tadema. She is both handsome and good-hearted. I have had four chats with Browning — nice fellow! He introduced me to "Tom Hughes." Miss Ingelow asked Calverley ("Fly Leaves") to meet me. Our most intimate friends here are the Lillies. You know Mr. Lillie was in the "Galaxy" office and Miss White is a writer.

To Charles de Kay


LONDON, December 15, 1879.

I've seen Browning twice; he reminds me of an india rubber ball, he has so much bounce — and is round and sudden; very jolly and kindly though, and interested in things — especially in art. He does n't

seem at all poetic at first — but those who know him best like him most and find the rhymers in him.

London is certainly big — but you must n't get the idea that it is n't pretty. It has n't the grandiose beauty of Paris — but it is full of all sorts of unexpected prettinesses. Little old St. James's Palace squatting down in the midst of it is jolly. The other day I went on a tramp through a lot of old streets and into a lot of gorgeous old halls and churches and outlandish coffee-houses and sich—nothing like it out of London. Then as you walk about you come upon little old manor houses surrounded by parks—right in the midst of the city which has grown up and around them. Put the name of *Stanford White* (McKim's partner) into your pipe as the coming architect.

Although his work in London and Paris bore important fruit for the magazine, my father's long absence from the office was beginning to be felt. Mr. Roswell Smith wrote to him about this time: "I think Drake's [the Art] Department needs you as well as the editorial and I, too, miss your counsel in regard to business methods. Your fine sense of what the public likes, and what the newspapers will take to is always valuable. I may say invaluable, and you can take your choice of words." So in May, 1880, the family returned to New York, and my father settled down to his office work with renewed energy and interest.





RICHARD WATSON GILDER

"Scribner's" becomes the "Century"

During the years preceding this date there had arisen between Charles Scribner's Sons, the book-house, and the managers of "Scribner's Monthly," certain points of disagreement, which culminated finally in the separation of the two concerns.

"I thought I should like to tell you," my father wrote to a friend and contributor, in December, 1880, "of the business changes here. Dr. Holland, while remaining editor of 'Scribner's,' has sold out nearly all of his stock — enough to Mr. Roswell Smith to give him a majority, and smaller parts to myself, Mr. Drake, Mr. Johnson, and others. So you see I am one of your employers (ahem!) and you must walk a straight line! We expect to publish some of our own most important books."

To Mr. Charles Scribner my father wrote in January, 1881: —

"Your brother Blair said to me once humorously, that one of these days all the interests here would come together with a crash and Gilder would go up between! I hope this time is not approaching. Dr. Holland's offer of a small part of his stock was unexpected, but on the advice of my wife's lawyer-brother I ventured to borrow some of my wife's money to make the investment, at what seems to me and the family a pretty good price.

"I most devoutly trust that matters may be settled

in a manner satisfactory to all parties. Business is not in my line; — I want to devote myself to editing and to a certain unfortunate passion for making words rhyme. That whatever course affairs take we will never cease to have pleasant personal relations is my great desire and, I firmly believe, the desire of every person in the concern."

The change in business arrangements necessitated a change in the name of the magazine, as "Scribner's" could no longer be used. There was much discussion on this subject, and the name finally decided upon was "The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine."

Together with these changes came others in the editorial department. Dr. Holland, although he had not for some time taken an active share in the management of the magazine, now formally resigned the editorship. In a signed editorial, summing up the history of the magazine and explaining its new organization, he pays this generous tribute to the "younger men": —


"I suppose if any one were asked what more than anything else had contributed to the success of the magazine, he would answer: its superb engravings and the era it introduced of improved illustrative art. This feature of our work is attributable to Mr. R. W. Gilder and to Mr. A. W. Drake, — the former the office editor and the latter the superintendent of the illustrative department. Mr. Smith and I, any further than that we have stood behind these men

with encouragement and money, deserve no credit for the marvellous development that has been made in illustration."

This was written in June, 1881. In October of that year Dr. Holland died. "We are all under great depression here," my father wrote at the time. "The Dr.'s death was almost as unexpected as if we had not known of his danger. We shall miss him beyond words — his quick sympathy, his warm encouragement, the inspiration of his generous confidence, his winning and fatherly presence."

My father was now editor-in-chief in name as well as in fact. From this time, November, 1881, to the very day of his death in November, 1909, his was the controlling influence in the magazine. "I expect now to lose my friends," he said, when he took command, "for I dare say I shall be whimsical (in the Emersonian sense) and I am sure I shall make mistakes!" In the first number of the "Century," November, 1881, he states his ideas for the new series — which, with Dr. Holland gone, the connection with "Scribner's" severed, and himself as editor-in-chief, is virtually a new magazine:—

"We intend that the 'Century' shall be a better magazine than 'Scribner's' ever was, and that the new series shall present so marked an improvement over that which preceded it that the new name shall not shine in a reflected glory, but shall acquire a significance entirely its own.



“It was many years, for instance, before ‘Scribner’s Monthly’ thoroughly grasped and adopted the scheme for presenting, as the best of all magazine material, the elaborate discussion of living, practical questions. This kind of discussion will have special prominence in the new series. Another feature of the new series will be popular studies of history. We made only one attempt at this in the old series and we know better how to manage it now. There is nothing that opens before us now more attractive than this field of illustrated historical research and representation. These two features of themselves would warrant us in denominating the future numbers of the magazine a new series, but we aim to make every department so fresh and excellent as to deserve the distinction.”

CHAPTER IV

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

1881-1885

"WE have new plans for making over the Studio," my mother wrote to Mrs. Foote in 1882; "Stanford White made them. Do you know his brother? This one is a genius! Rodman is to sit for Saint-Gaudens — a medallion for the front of the house." Stanford White was indeed a genius, and indulged in occasional flights of fancy in his work, which even the artistic and unconventional household on Fifteenth Street could not live up to. Such a flight was his first plan for the Studio, upon the façade of which he proposed to design in colored glass two peacocks, with their wings outspread covering the whole third story of the house.

"My dear White," wrote my father, "when I saw the design of the peacocks and the inscription, I said to myself — here is another of White's stunning ideas! and it is. But my dear fellow, it will never, never do! Almost on the day on which those peacocks would spread their wings on my front wall, the new edition of 'The New Day' would appear — I have taken my peacock off the cover, you know — and the whole town, especially the whole Century Club next

door, would say 'His peacock has flown higher!' 103 would be called the 'Peacock House' from Dan to Beersheba, and there would seldom be less than sixteen persons on the sidewalk trying to make out that inscription and waiting to see the peacocks flap their wings. As decoration the thing is stunning, superb, — in artistic taste it is O.K., — on the question of social taste, proportion, etc., I am more than doubtful. I am prepared to have people call the house affected; but I fear that those peacocks and that inscription on the exterior would give me no peace in my life. The peacock house and the peacock man would have a notoriety that would detract from more important matters. I hope to fight in the interest of art and good taste for many years in New York, but I must not handicap myself. In your first design for the house there were some flowing decorative lines, and knots, or bunches of glass. Will you make a design something of that sort instead of the peacocks and inscription?"

The plan of the peacocks was therefore abandoned, with much reluctance on Stanford White's part. A suggestion of it remains, however, in the decoration of the third story, where a pattern of round, deep-colored pieces of glass forms an effective decoration. Between the windows on the second floor are set, on one side the medallion by Saint-Gaudens, and on the other his brother Louis's head of the little Marion made from a sketch by my mother. The

little house, behind its high grating and at the end of its long garden walk, still stands as it did then, although it is now almost hidden by the tall buildings on either side.

The rebuilding of the Studio, her household cares, and the demands of her art did not, apparently, absorb all my mother's energy, for she undertook about this time the translation of Sensier's "Life of Millet." It was published by Macmillan & Co., and was received with much interest and with favorable comment for the work of the translator. About the time of this "first appearance" of my mother as a writer, my father was, for the first time, asked to write a poem for a public function, the occasion being the presentation to the city of the Obelisk, in Central Park.

"My recollection is," he wrote some years later, "that I by no means promised the committee that I would fulfil their request to prepare a hymn for the presentation (in fact, I have never promised a poem for an occasion), but having engaged to furnish them with one, which I hoped to get some one else to write, the thought came to me and the hymn (such as it is) was written. Theodore Thomas led a great chorus in its singing, to the tune of 'Ein Feste Burg.'"

My father contributed not only his hymn to the occasion, but also his active coöperation in the preparation and printing of the programme. When the first one submitted did not come up to his standard

he offered, characteristically, to have a second printed at his own expense, though I believe in the end it was not necessary for him to do so.

Family Matters

Shortly after this my father went to Washington on business. On his return to New York he was greeted with the news of his brother William's dramatic return from the Arctic. William H. Gilder had gone out as a newspaper correspondent, with the ship Rogers, on an Arctic expedition, and now returned after a perilous three months' journey virtually alone, across Siberia, to tell of the burning of the ship and of the desperate condition of the crew. This sledge journey from the northeastern extremity of Siberia to the Jena River was described as "the one achievement which easily transcends all that has previously been done by the daring, adventurous, and enterprising breed of newspaper correspondents. It is a march with which none other can stand in comparison, when one considers the distance, the difficulties, and the necessarily inadequate outfit."

Other members of the family were no less energetic, though perhaps not so spectacular in their activities. "Jean and Joe start a paper here next Saturday," wrote my father to a friend of the family in January, 1881. "It is to be called 'The Critic.' It is a wild thing to do, but they have had, like the founders of the 'Register,' lots of encouragement."

The Cesnola Affair

It was in the spring of 1882 that my father received what he called his "editorial baptism of fire," his initiation into the angers and injustices of a public controversy. "It made me suddenly an older and a wiser man," he said. "I was astonished at the conduct of good men on the defensive." Instinctively peace-loving, naturally of an optimistic and kindly disposition, any form of controversy was intensely repugnant to him. Yet he had so strong a sense of justice and such a fund of indignation against "prospered wrong," that again and again during his life he became involved in public discussions, often of the most violent and bitter character. Moral indignation was in him a compelling emotion, but it was an emotion controlled and guided in its expression. He never let himself be carried away by his feelings without a careful examination of the facts involved, and a minute study of every side of a question. Like Jefferson in his acting, he had a cool head and a warm heart. It was his strength that he knew a subject thoroughly, and expressed his opinion calmly, but that he had behind this control an emotional intensity that gave his words vitality and effect.

In writing of these past controversies certain difficulties arise. My father was averse to the harboring of bitter or unkindly memories, so that in writing of him I would naturally wish to adopt his point of view.

Yet these exposures, making such demands upon his time, and connected with so many public movements, cannot be passed over, even though they may reflect unfavorably on people and institutions still in existence. Another point is that questions such as politics, international copyright, and tenement house reform would require, in order to make their broader bearings fully understood, a more extensive treatment than I am able to give space to here. It has been my effort, therefore, to treat them from my father's point of view, to give his method of dealing with them rather than details of the affairs themselves, and to this end I have used his own letters, even if they are not always as consecutive as a narrative would be.

In the first case, the "baptism of fire," my father found himself in opposition to no less an institution than the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Two years before, in 1880, a charge had been brought against the director of the Museum, Louis P. di Cesnola, to the effect that he had restored and altered the statuary of the collection of Cyprian antiques, which he had previously sold to the Museum, in such a way as materially to lessen their value. This accusation, repeated by different people, and on different occasions, was met by sweeping denials on the part of Cesnola and the trustees of the Museum. My father, although he followed the discussion with interest, took no part in it until the spring of 1882, when, ow-

ing to the publication in the "Century" of certain articles on archæology, the magazine became involved. He then examined the whole affair with the greatest care and thoroughness, to judge only from the mass of material still left among his papers, and finally in the "Century" for August, published an editorial reviewing the entire question, and adducing damaging evidence against Cesnola and his treatment of the collection.

"Sometime, perhaps I will be able to explain," he wrote to a friend on August 2 of that year, "with what reluctance I went into this matter — and how desperately hard I tried to get the truth out of those trustees I was able to reach (namely, the best informed); how I pleaded with them to keep this thing outside the papers and magazines and courts; how grossly I was deceived; with what minute care and with what judicious advice (taking none from Cesnola's critics) I finally prepared and printed what I knew would have more weight and do more 'harm,' or good, than some of the bad-tempered and inaccurate statements that had appeared in the dailies. The inside history of the article is open to any one who cares to know what means of information I had. One of these days, instead of blaming me for what I have printed, the trustees may thank me for mercifully leaving unprinted the facts that I suppressed. Some, if not many, of the accusations appear to me extravagant; but, on the other hand, the treatment of

the collection by the director has been helter-skelter and, in some cases, damaging.

"There has been, to say the least, an amount of evasion that has aroused suspicions — some of which suspicions doubtless are far beyond the truth.


"In my own mind the suspicions are so great that last night when my wife presented me with an apparently genuine — not 'antiquity' but rather 'novelty' in the shape of an infant weighing eight pounds, I refused to accept the object till it had been placed in a warm bath and been pronounced by a competent committee of experts *not* to be a 'fraudulent patchwork of unrelated parts.'"

To Albert Stickney

March 31, 1883.

I am well aware that as to the "merits of the case" legally, and from the point of view of a lawyer, I am not qualified to speak with any assurance. But from the human, and especially from the art, point of view, I naturally feel a little — in fact, a good deal surer.

Professionally I claim an amount of experience which is unusual, of a kind bearing directly on this subject. For thirteen years I have managed an illustrated periodical, which is on one side an archæological journal. We have to keep up with the times on all subjects of art and archæology. I am not an archæologist, — nor am I a novelist, — but I know something about the novelist and something about novels. I



have to know who are the trustworthy experts and authorities in art matters. I am constantly testing the honesty and learning of men in this line; and I have perforce a certain knowledge and experience of all matters relating to art.

When the director of our Museum is assailed, it is my immediate business to find out whether I can trust him. I look into the matter and find I cannot. The deeper I look, the worse I find things. This is exactly the position of the scientific world to-day.

To ———

Of this fact I am satisfied: up to the moment of the appearance of the August "Century" the general public opinion was in favor of the Museum; from that date everything was changed. Hitherto the statements made against the director, or the Museum, have been at least denied. Not one statement made by the "Century" has been or can be denied. What the authorities do is of no consequence in my mind. The public is convinced.

The public was convinced, but the trustees remained obdurate, and Cesnola, in spite of his proved incompetence, in spite of lawsuits against him, and in spite of the efforts of certain of the trustees, remained in his place, to the great detriment of the Museum and of the "cause of respectable archæology in America." It was not until more than twenty years later, in

1905, that my father could write, in a letter to Mr. Gosse:—

“I have had the pleasure of seeing Sir C. Purdon Clark several times — they wanted me to speechify at him at the Lotos the other night, but I was not well enough. He makes a good impression, and his succession to poor impossible Cesnola has brought about a cordial feeling in the community toward the Museum. For a long time Cesnola has only been kept owing to the fact that some good and liberal-handed old man was president, whom he attached to himself — though the board was against him. The growth of the Museum will be enormous, now that it has Morgan at its head and a capable and honest man as director.”

Various Subjects

Meanwhile a number of those movements for the public welfare, in which he was later to bear an important part, were engaging my father's attention. In January, 1883, the first mention of Free Art is found in a summons to Frank D. Millet to come and consult with him on that subject. A bill was drawn up and confided to the care of Mr. Perry Belmont, to be carried through the national legislature. In this same year Dr. Eggleston, Mr. Lathrop, and my father organized the American Copyright League, and a year later my father was actively backing the Dorsheimer International Copyright Bill. Although no action

was taken on this particular bill, this was the first important move in the long campaign for international copyright — a campaign which finally ended in success.

His editorial work was, however, of principal importance to him. He speaks in one of his editorials of being "actively and eagerly engaged in the enterprise," and the phrase is characteristic of his attitude towards all his work. The first five years of the "Century" under its new name show the results of this energy and eagerness. Among the "features" for these years are Mr. George Cable's "History of the Creoles," and his novel "Dr. Sevier"; John Hay's novel "The Bread-Winners" — published anonymously and arousing at the time intense interest and discussion; chapters from Stevenson's "Silverado Squatters," and novels by Mr. Howells. The Civil War Series and the Life of Lincoln, though not published till later, were under consideration at the time. Together they formed by far the most important publication ever undertaken by a magazine. The Civil War Series alone required an enormous amount of work on the part of the two editors who had it in charge, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Buel, while my father's hand guided the Life of Lincoln through the difficult processes of completion and publication. It is not to be wondered at that the whole office force was working at top speed, and that the editor-in-chief found his time completely occupied. He had, how-

ever, an extraordinary capacity for work, a power of getting through an apparently overwhelming amount of manuscripts and correspondence in the shortest possible time. His associates in the office have often spoken of this, and it is a source of continual astonishment to me, as I read his journals and letters. As an editor he not only planned and organized on a large scale, but he gave his attention to the most minute details of his profession. He had, indeed, an infinite capacity for taking pains, which he carried into every field of his activity.

All the demands made upon him, and they were many and of the most divergent kind, received a prompt and effective response, whether it was to help a friend in need, organize a dinner to some foreigner of note, advise a stranger as to his future career in art or literature, or merely to pass judgment on the poetic ability of some aspiring high-school graduate.

With all this intensity of life, there was in him nothing breathless or hasty. He seemed neither restless nor ceaselessly agitated. He had a fund of whimsical humor, a genial and understanding quality that made his presence a delight. Mrs. Burnett speaks of him as the "embodiment of the power to make one glad," and I can think of no more fitting expression of the reassuring and at the same time invigorating quality of his personality.

The letters that follow, disconnected as they are in time and content, fill in a little the outline of these

busy years. The first gives expression to one of the trials of an editor's life, a very real trial, when the scene is transferred, as it was in other cases, to a club or drawing-room, and the author to a man of standing, but not, perhaps, of the best taste!

To a friend

I am, as a rule, not very enthusiastic about meeting people, because people I meet usually carry concealed manuscripts. One man waylays me on Broadway with what you may call an airgun. He gets his poem by heart, meets me accidentally when I return to the office from lunch and recites it as we walk along.

P.S. I am not afraid of *real* writers, so don't feel snubbed.

To James Bryce

May 8, 1883.

You ask in one of your letters something about the future of this country. The fact is that there are so many pressing and extremely important matters to be taken care of in the present, that we do not need to look very far ahead to find food for thought and anxiety. The civil service reform law amounts almost to a revolution; at the same time the practical carrying out of the system and the enlargement of it entail an amount of watchfulness and exertion that make all interested in the question quite as busy as ever.

Just as the abolition of slavery did not do away with the question of the amelioration of the negro, so the passage of the civil service reform bill has not done away with the question of proper administration of our civil service, national, state, and municipal. Instead of living at a time when everything has been accomplished, we seem to be only just coming to the difficult and delicate questions, such as the question of tariff, of the domination of corporations, of the secret and corrupt government of our municipalities by irresponsible "bosses." We are indeed just waking up in America to the evils that come along with the benefits of universal suffrage. Our scholarly critics are even questioning, not our Republican system, but our system of checks and balances involved in our triple form of government, by the Executive, Legislature, and Judiciary. Nearly all these questions are borne in upon us in a pressing and imperative manner by the rascality of some of our rich men and rich corporations, and the swindling done by the "gangs" and "rings" made up often of members of both the leading parties. Along with such political questions as the above come such social and educational questions as the proper method whereby the general government can help to reduce the illiteracy in the States and the burning question of the co-education of the sexes.

Then in the matter of details we have such questions as the tariff on works of art and on books, and

the question of international copyright. Just as I was helping our younger artists with a bill for the total abolition of tariff on works of art, which failed this year to come to a vote, certain numskulls went to work on the general tariff bill, and without any popular or congressional discussion of the subject, and without the knowledge of either the artists or those interested in art, the tariff was put up from ten to thirty per cent within a year or two.

Now as to international copyright—my friends in the State Department tell me that the treaty is actually still under advisement. Meantime, however, a movement which a few of us started a year ago has been revived — a copyright league in which it is intended to include all the writers of the country, in fact all the producers of copyrightable matter (without regard to literary standing), with a view to pressing a law giving equal rights to foreign authors, this without any reference to a treaty and trusting wholly to the expectation that foreign authors will reciprocate by extending to our own authors the same courtesy — if courtesy it can be called. This latest is a movement independent of the publishers. Our idea is to try to bring the matter before the public especially in its moral aspect and to try and educate public opinion in the direction of honesty and fair dealing.

I believe that the people are sound on this question; the only trouble is that when it comes to legislation,

interested manufacturers go to Congress and bring every sort of influence to bear upon the members. If we make the members feel that public opinion is aroused they will act perhaps as they did in the matter of the civil service bill. Still it will be difficult to counteract the kind of influence which will be brought to bear on international copyright. However, "our cause is just" and will triumph in the end.

An effort is being made to stir up Columbia College and make a genuine university of it. Meantime Johns Hopkins is growing in favor every year.

To Horace E. Scudder

I had a very minor part indeed in Mr. Lowell's retention [as minister to the court of St. James's] under Arthur. On the death of Garfield, when Mr. Frelinghuysen came into Arthur's cabinet — or was about to come — viz. on November 11, 1881, I wrote to Mr. Frelinghuysen (a fellow Jerseyman and an old friend) urging the retention of Lowell. This was before Frelinghuysen had actually entered the cabinet. He wrote to me confidentially giving me to understand that he was going into the cabinet, and authorizing me to say, so far as he was concerned, that Mr. Lowell would be retained. On my sending to Lowell Frelinghuysen's reassuring message, I received from him a letter. On receipt of this I again wrote to Frelinghuysen the following letter: —

"January 18, 1882.

"Mr. Lowell writes me: 'I trust you gave Mr. F. no reason to think that I had any finger in your intervention. I would n't turn my hand over to prevent my recall. All I meant to say was that I am one of those old-fashioned persons (born under the old dispensation) who are foolish enough to feel a kick — that's all I meant to say. But I thank you most heartily all the same.'

"I believe you did not misunderstand the situation. A casual good-humored mention in a letter to me made me suppose that he would be willing to stay — and therefore I spoke to you. He did not know I had the slightest acquaintance with you — nor did he dream that I would lift my finger in the matter."

Note written in 1899: "When Lowell was in trouble about the Irish matter, I talked to Frelinghuysen about it in his house in Washington. He implied that Lowell had made a mistake, but he added significantly 'He has friends.'"

To Edmund Gosse

November 1, 1882.

We started an Authors' Club at our house the other night. You will be surprised to hear that there is no such thing in the city — but perhaps you will not be surprised either, for I doubt if there is such a thing in London. I do not know how it will succeed,

but there seems to be a demand for such an organization to bring literary workers together occasionally. The idea is not to have a permanent, always open club house, but to have fortnightly meetings in some one place.

Lang's book is very charming, but I wish he would let himself go a little more. In fact I am not sure but that it is a bad sign for young writers to refrain — as young writers generally do nowadays — from "slopping over," that is, of course, in their youth. It seems to be the aim of scholarly and polished young poets never to surprise anybody — especially not themselves. Taste is a good thing, in fact it is indispensable, but when a man makes you too conscious of the faculty of taste, you begin to suspect that that is the only quality he has, and taste by itself is not interesting — it is only useful as a regulator. — But I did not mean to write a literary essay.

February 6, 1883.

By the way, has it ever occurred to Stevenson to do a Chaucer series à la Arabian Nights? Can you get a story from him for us? Is he not the "new man" you told me about when we were walking down towards the Park after the Athenæum Club? He has a delicious humor. Will he keep it up — respect his talent — and have a "career"? I find he knows some of my American artist friends.



RICHARD WATSON GILDER



HELENA DR. KAY GILDER

To Robert Louis Stevenson

February 17, 1883.

Mr. Gosse has no doubt already conveyed to you our editorial greetings and aspirations. I cannot keep from adding a more personal word, feeling that I have some nearer acquaintance with you than even through your books—on account of some of our common friends among the young American artist community, late of France. A lot of us younger men and women have had a kind of revival—love-feast and experience meeting over your books lately. I would blush to tell you how much we think of them. “My wife and I” are taken by them not merely on account of their human and artistic charm and force, but for certain characteristics—such as the camping-out passion which we share with the author of “Travels with a Donkey.” May we not hope that you will let us see some of your handwriting—especially of the fictitious sort—with a view to publication in the magazine?

To Edmund Gosse

March 23, 1886.

You remember Stevenson’s gigantic and delightful project about the Rhone? He said to me that the man who did it would have to have, among other qualities, the strength of a bullock. Of course he is not likely to be able to carry it out in its entirety; but I asked Low lately if he would, in writing over, lure

him with the idea of their doing one or more papers on the Rhone together. The result is Low's tragic letter from Stevenson, leaping at the idea, but saying that hemorrhages will haunt them through their journey, and that Low must not be frightened by them, and must simply take good care of him. To this Mrs. Stevenson adds a postscript saying that the "mysterious" malady which afflicts Louis is doubtless none other than consumption, and that in one of these hemorrhages he may slip this life. Still she is not sure that it may not be a good thing for him.

You know Pennell and Miss Preston are doing the Avignon neighborhood, but the river is still open for Stevenson and Low if they can do it together. We could not well use more than three papers. We do not *need* any, but it would be such a delightful thing that I am prepared to do some squeezing to get it in. I don't see how we could handle more than three papers, but I doubt if Stevenson will have the strength to do more than one. Low is going the first part of May to France with his wife. He will correspond with Stevenson, and learn, especially through Mrs. Stevenson, whether the expedition is desirable. Will you please watch the thing from the Stevenson end, and if he needs an advance when the time comes you may give it to him. You understand the situation.

March 8, 1884.

I bade Mr. Arnold and family good-bye on the steamer this afternoon. He goes with a kindly feeling, I am sure. I like him very much. He has committed, perhaps, some awkwardnesses here in his "endeavor to propitiate people whom he does not respect," but beside the great regard for his literature we have always had, we like him personally — and his family too. He promises to come back, and he will have a hearty welcome when he comes. So will you and Dobson. When are you coming?

Grant Memoirs

To H. G.

October 22, 1884.

General Grant has just been in — spent some time here and wants us to publish his book or books. It made me feel badly to see him so lame.

In connection with this, the projected publication of the famous Grant "Memoirs" by the Century Company, I quote the following letter, written during the summer of 1884 by Roswell Smith to my father: —

NEW YORK, September 9, 1884.

I will write now to tell you of our interview with General Grant on Saturday. It was in every way satisfactory and I think a good impression was made on both sides. I found him thoroughly intelligent in

relation to the subscription book business, and very much disgusted with the way it is usually managed. He remarked that he did not propose to pay a scalawag canvasser \$6 for selling a \$12 book, not worth much more than half the money, as in some cases he quoted. His ideas agree with ours — to make a good book, manufacture it handsomely, sell it at a reasonable price, and make it so commanding that we can secure competent agents at a fair commission.

The day was charming at Long Branch. We dined at Mr. Childs's, and I have to thank you and Mr. Johnson for a very memorable pleasure.

When the book is ready he is to come to us with it.

He did come to the "Century" with the book, as my father's letter of October 22 shows, but the arrangements for its publication by that company were never completed. Mr. Smith suddenly found himself confronted by no less brilliant and imaginative a competitor than Mark Twain, who, by his astonishingly liberal offer and the power of his personality, succeeded in carrying off the prize. Mr. Paine, in his *Life of Mark Twain*, describes the incident: —

"One night (it was early in November, 1884), when Cable and Clemens had finished a reading at Chickering Hall, Clemens, coming out into the wet blackness, happened to hear Richard Watson Gilder's voice say to some unseen companion: 'Do you know that General Grant has actually determined to write



his memoirs and publish them? He has said so to-day in so many words.'

"With Mrs. Clemens he promptly overtook Gilder and accompanied him to his house, where they discussed the matter in its various particulars. Gilder said that the 'Century' editors had endeavored to get Grant to contribute to their war series, but that not until his financial disaster, as a member of the firm of Grant & Ward, had he been willing to consider the matter. He said that Grant now welcomed the idea of contributing three papers to the series, and that the promised payment of five hundred dollars each had gladdened his heart and relieved him of immediate anxiety. (Somewhat later the Century Company voluntarily added liberally to this sum.)"

Clemens went to see Grant, found him considering a memorandum from the "Century," and offered him much more liberal terms, which Grant finally accepted.

The Century Company, as an established firm, carrying many other interests beside the one in question, could not compete with Mark Twain's independent and dazzling offer. Charles L. Webster & Co., Mark Twain's publishing concern, made of the publishing of the "Memoirs" a tremendous success, paying the widow of the General what was said to be the largest single royalty check ever made out. When, some years later, Webster & Co. failed, the Century Company took up the "Memoirs," which now appear under its imprint.

To H. G.

October 27, 1884.

I'm not going to tell you all about my homesickness! I could tell you a lot of pretty little stories that would bring the tears to your eyes. But I want you to stay where you are as long as you can, for your own sake. I'm having a good enough time here — and the baby is as bright as a penny. Yesterday I went to Dr. Huntington's (Grace) in the morning; to the Gilders' to dinner to meet Miss Kellogg;¹ to the concert, to tea at the L.'s, where was William James, who had just called at our house; and in the evening later, after nine, I asked Mrs. Glenny, etc., to come over and had Miss Kellogg and Jean to meet them. Mary got them some tea and they thought the Studio beautiful and talked about you all the time; much to my comfort.

October 23.

Mr. Johnson showed us a new window — La Farge's St. Paul in glass — perfectly stunning. It is going right away, so you won't see it till you go to Stockbridge. It has some silly-pretty work above and below it, confound it, but the figure part is magnificent. General Beauregard was at the office when we were there. Grant one day and Beauregard the next!

¹ Clara Louise Kellogg, the opera singer.

October 28.

I'm beginning to think I would make a very poor bachelor. However, I get along well — considering. I stick to the house as much as I can, as I don't like being away on account of the young one, especially. The magazine (for November) is selling beyond anything hitherto known to us. T. A. J. will take all the credit, I know. Don't spoil his pride by saying it's the war series.

I am so extremely busy at the office that my housework does not go on as fast as it might. I send some political tracts that any one can have who wants 'em. At least some Democrat might care to enlighten his brethren thereby, even if there are no Republican independents.

To H. G. at Milton-on-the-Hudson

October 31, 1884.

It's queer to be writing to you again in Milton. I've had about enough of the bachelor life, and am not a bit sorry you are on your way home. Politics is gettin' more and more excitin'! I hear excellent things of Cleveland, and worse and worse of Blaine. How are the Hallocks going to vote? Give my love to them all — voters and non-voters.

Cleveland-Blaine Campaign

The Presidential campaign of 1884 involved my father in his first political work. Blaine was strenu-

ously opposed, not only by the Democratic party, but also by many members of his own party. My father joined these Independent Republicans, though for the reasons given in the following letters he did not sign the call. He worked none the less vigorously, however, using all his energy and influence against Blaine, and in behalf of the Democratic candidate, Grover Cleveland. In view of his later intimacy with Cleveland, it is interesting to see what a high opinion he entertained of him, long before he knew him personally. During this campaign, as at certain trying periods later in his career, Cleveland was unmercifully attacked and criticized. My father received his share of condemnation for his interest in and support of this "rural sheriff, without letters, without public experience, without any qualification for the place — whose election would mean disaster." In the end, however, my father's judgment, though only that of a much-scorned "reformer" and "literary fellow," was triumphantly vindicated, not only by Cleveland's election in this particular campaign, but by his subsequent career.

To R. R. Bowker

MARION, MASS., June 12, 1884.

I have concluded that on the whole it is better for me *not* to sign the call. If our magazine were either political — with the right to support or reject nominations — or else totally *non-political*, I would not

hesitate. As it is, we do discuss "politics" — but without the slightest partisan leaning. Our comments, therefore, should come from an *uncommitted* source.

In other words, I think I can be more useful as an opponent of all that Blaine's nomination means, outside than inside the list of signers. As a private citizen I shall doubtless join the Independents (as I have already the Republicans) but I do not care to have my name used as those of the signers must be. I am sure you will appreciate my position.

In this little quiet country town of Massachusetts I am surprised to find so strong an opposition to Blaine among the Republicans, some of the most prominent of whom have announced their intention to vote for any *good* Democrat. I have just been writing to Watterson begging him to give us a good War-Democrat.

You must know I am with you heart and soul, as we all are at the "Century Magazine."

To Edmund Gosse

June 7, 1884.

We are sick of this Blaine and Logan business. Blaine is a brilliant, corrupt demagogue — no man of his character has ever been nominated by a large party for the Presidency. We hope for his defeat by some clean Democrat; but the Democrats have an infinite capacity for making mistakes and putting up the wrong man.

To Bishop Potter

MARION, MASS., 1884.

In your kind note, for which I thank you very sincerely, you say, "What is a chronic Republican to do, anyhow?" The answer I have made to myself, with satisfaction, is "Vote for Cleveland, as you did when he was up for governor." He is the same man now, only broader and better, for four years' conflict with Tammany. He has made a brave and efficient governor. As President I believe his Administration would make an era in the history of the country. He would make actual and pervasive the reform of executive administration, for which good Republicans and good Democrats have been working and praying for the last fifteen years. He is in conflict with no Republican principle or theory, he would do nothing that a good Republican would grieve at; and, beside bringing an absolutely necessary rebuke to a party which has, *out of love and admiration*, set up for our votes a scheming, dishonest, and dangerous politician, his election would be a positive good in carrying on sympathetically and fairly the great work of governmental reform.

To W. C. P. Breckinridge

MARION, MASS., June 24, '85.

Please don't say "no" to our war request! This is the time for the "unveiling of all hearts." If the North can see the heart of the South, and the South

the North's, they will love each other as never before! This is truth, and not sentimentalism.

By the way, I have been reading your political campaign essay, with interest and admiration. Here is a little one that I printed for my friends ("The Three Crises"), as I could not make a speech or print politics (i.e., personal politics) in the magazine. The magazine confined itself to general remarks — letting the principles of political morality enunciated hurt whom they liked. But this was my personal confession of faith — distributed in my native town in New Jersey — and among my literary and other friends, and printed, beside, in several newspapers. I believe in it literally, to-day, and I think Cleveland's course proves the view correct. Cleveland was, and is, the man for the crisis. The simple idea that public business is *business* has gradually passed out of sight and belief. A man who had fought against slavery in the war and elsewhere, or who had voted for Lincoln, or who since those days adopted the Republican (my own) faith, believed himself and was generally believed to be "wholly sanctified," and also to deserve any sinecure the Government could bestow. The spoils system was corrupting the nation. Cleveland to-day is doing all a man can do to kill it. I think he means to ask for further laws after a while, for its extension. It *must* be extended till the minor offices are all covered by it. Gradually the Republican party will come to the point of making it the leading issue. The

Democrats can only hold power, and only deserve to do so by following Cleveland's lead. Like Lincoln he knows what common sense demands, and what the honest heart of the nation believes in and craves, and will have sooner or later.

Southern Trip

The mention in this letter to Colonel Breckinridge, of his article for the War Series shows that the "Century" forces were hard at work on this campaign of their own.

In the spring of 1885, my father, with Frank H. Scott, then secretary of the Century Company, went on a Southern trip in connection with the magazine work. They journeyed by way of Washington, Charleston, and Atlanta to New Orleans, returning through St. Louis, Chicago, and the Blue-Grass country of Kentucky. My father's letters are full of enthusiastic accounts of the new scenes and people he encountered during this crowded month. From New Orleans he writes to my mother: —

April 16, '85.

You can have no idea of the diversified interest of our sojourn here and the number of engagements from dawn to midnight. This is by all odds the most interesting community of the continent and we keep on the strain to see as much as possible.

I think that they have advanced so far in the liberal

direction that what remains of conservatism should neither surprise nor alarm any one. They almost without exception rejoice in the death of slavery and the most reactionary men I have met, no less than the others, express an affection for Lincoln that is surprising. It is indeed most touching and remarkable in every way that now they look back to his death as one of the greatest calamities the South has ever sustained.

This morning Mr. Scott and I did the Woman's Department of the Fair under Miss Maud Howe's kindly guidance and in the company of General Beauregard and Joe Jefferson. To-night we dined at the Nicholls' — altogether a delightful family. He is a jewel — vivacious, frank, genial, amusing — you all would dote on him. He is very proud of his relationship to the poet [Joseph Rodman Drake]. The General is a great favorite; he is apparently the leading man in their political reforms here — their hero and pride, and the especial favorite of the thinking and public-spirited citizens.

This Southern hospitality is all that has ever been said about it. There is a peculiar charm about all these people — men and women — girls and boys. Everything is romantic to me, fresh, tropical, strange. Yesterday I heard my first mockingbird! My only regret is that you are not here. But we will spend part of some winter here together.

HOTEL ROYAL, NEW ORLEANS,
April 21, 1885.


I arrived back in town from Petite Anse late last night. This day we have been dashing around saying good-bye. I called on a genuine little Creole Arcadianess this morning — the only *lady* Creole I have seen. Of course there are plenty of Creoles of the landlady pattern, easy to be seen — but the poverty-stricken genuine lady is not to be seen at once. Another week and we would get into a number of such families. But that is reserved till we come down together!

Well, we wound up our visit in a blaze of glory to-night! We took a box at the old French opera house for the concert of a Creole girl who wants to go to Paris to study. We saw lots of the true thing — very French and pretty. We had a jolly time visiting and saying good-bye and then a lot of us, with the General, adjourned to the Club and had a little supper. I am packing now, — and start for Vicksburg in the morning and on to St. Louis.

The trip, though full of interest and pleasure, was evidently too fatiguing, for shortly after his return to New York he writes to Mr. Gosse: —

July 8, '85.

Your kind and friendly letter is here like a warm handgrasp. I was ill with illnesses of large name — but it was light — both the pleurisy and the pneumonia, and they have apparently left nothing serious



behind. I am gaining daily and am in excellent "mental" condition. I don't think it was overwork. I had been on a Southern tour and perhaps coming back into a different and colder climate — unseasonably cool, as it seemed to a traveller from the South, may have had to do with it.

In spite of his illness there seems to have been very little break in my father's work, until quite late in the summer. Even then, on his vacation his letters are full of business details and public cares, as well as private sorrows. The summer was indeed a sad one, for his mother, who had been ill since the January before, died in August of this year. Writing from Bordentown on the 24th of that month, to my mother, he says: —

"We buried Mother to-day at noon. I threw into her grave a few leaves from the rose-bush at the foot of our children's grave.¹ There was nothing but the regular Episcopal service, except, at my request, the reading of the 121st Psalm — which Mother made me read to her the night she heard of Father's fate. 'I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.' The one thing that calmed and comforted me was the sight of Mother's peaceful face. Strange that one of my age should have an orphaned feeling. But it is as if the roof of the

¹ A son, Richard de Kay, had been born, and died in December, 1880.

house I was in had been lifted away, and I was out in the night under the open sky."

"Lyrics"

These years of various beginnings, of travel, public duties, and editorial work, were not without their undercurrent of poetic expression. The verses accumulated little by little until, in the summer of 1885, he could write to Mr. Gosse: —

"I am to put all my verses into a volume of about 260 pages next fall ('Scribner's'), but remembering what you once said about an English volume, I want to anticipate your renewal of the offer to find me a publisher, by saying that I will not wish to bring out the book in England. I will send my friends copies, for remembrance, and I cannot consent that they, or any publisher, should bother with a book for which, in England, there is no demand that I cannot supply myself without the assistance of a book-seller — namely, free copies to half a dozen friends. A thousand thanks to you all the same for the suggestion once made and which I am thinking would be renewed were it not for this."

In spite of this he writes a few months later: "Without my knowledge, I find that my publishers have arranged for an English edition. I cannot suppose, however, that there will be any market for my wares over there."

In this, however, he was mistaken, for "Lyrics,"

published in December, 1885, was received, both in England and America, with marked appreciation and praise.

The poems in this volume are, as usual, closely related to his daily life and moods. Here is a group of poems, after-songs of the Civil War, evoked by such solemn and moving spectacles as the burial of Grant. In this group is the sonnet on the life-mask of Lincoln, of which John Hay, Lincoln's private secretary and official biographer, said: "Your sonnet on the Mask seems finer every time I read it. It is nearer the heart of the matter than anything I have said. But that is what a poet is for!"

The "Midsummer Song" appeared in this volume for the first time. It has been put to music over and over again and is perhaps the best known of my father's songs; although, as he used laughingly to tell us, an amateur musician who saw it in manuscript said that she felt she ought to tell him it could never by any possibility be sung! Of another poem, my father wrote some years later in answer to a question of Walt Whitman's biographer: —

"'When the True Poet Comes' was supposed by some to have been suggested by Walt Whitman, and, when asked, I had to say it was not so suggested, as, indeed, should be evident to any one who reads the poem carefully, because in it I say: 'Manners like other men, an unstrange gear.' This means that the particular poet I spoke of was conventional in his

dress and bearing, which Whitman was not. I may tell you that I referred to the lack of appreciation of Charles de Kay's poetry."

To W. D. Howells

November 19, 1885.

Your kind little note had a pang in it for me. You say that the book had already come to you through the Harpers. I hope that does not mean that you have any task concerning it. The kind words with which "The New Day" was greeted by you in the "Atlantic" on its first appearance should answer for a lifetime. It was not only encouraging but useful, for I remember one, at least, of your definite suggestions, which was at once adopted by me. The present edition of the book I want you to see especially because a good deal has been omitted from the work as it first appeared, and there are a great many changes beside. I hope now it is in better literary tone throughout, though still far from what I should like it to be.

CHAPTER V

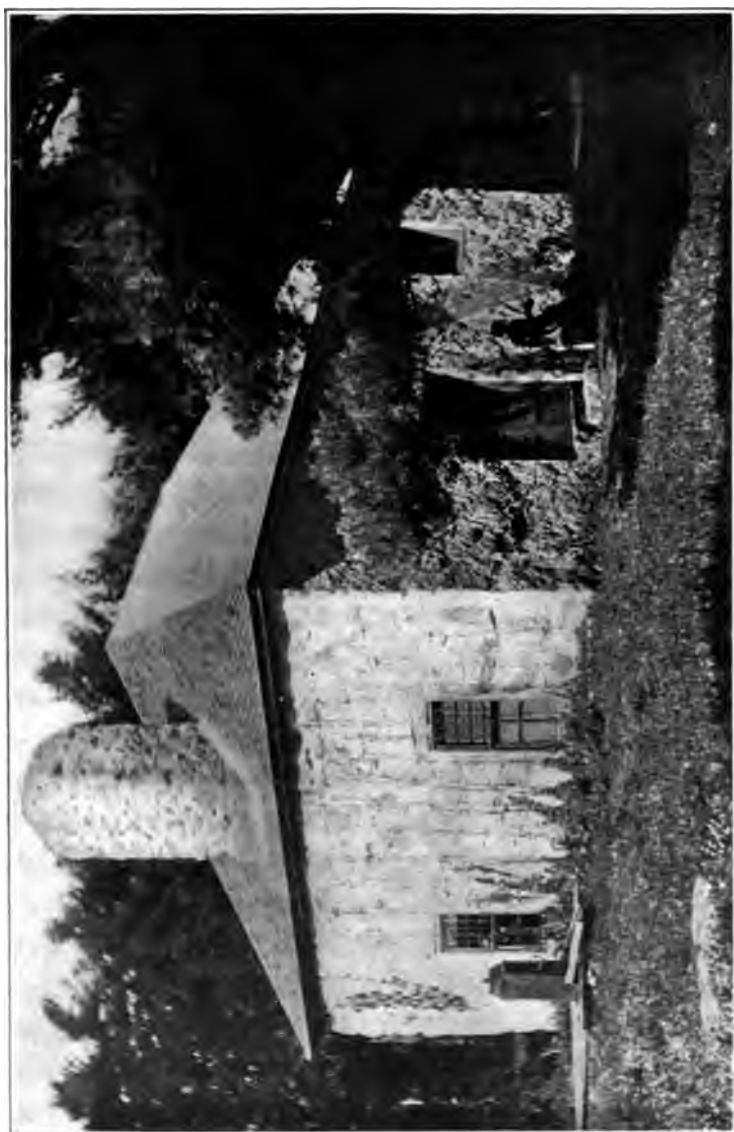
MARION DAYS

1885-1888

JUST as the setting of their life in New York was characteristic of my father's and mother's personalities, so they created in the little town of Marion, where for ten years they spent the summer months, a fitting and delightful environment. "Mrs. Gilder as a summer hostess," wrote a friend after a visit there, "is no less kind and bountiful than she of Fifteenth Street. The woods and sea fall naturally into her background and make one think it best always to live in the country, in elemental instead of complex conditions. The Studio scene is a charming remembrance to go with so many other glimpses of a certain poet and his friends."

When they first went to Marion, this little village on the headwaters of Buzzards' Bay was as inconspicuous and out of the way a spot as could be imagined. They were drawn to it, not only by its "sedative influence," as Henry James describes it, — "the conviction that its toneless air would minister to perfect rest," — but more especially by the presence there of Miss Harwood, the "Miss Bessy" of my father's earliest memories.

Inaccessible as Marion was, — one had to go there by a devious route, by boat, by trains, and by stage, — the family returned there every summer, and finally bought a piece of land. In Mr. James's "Bostonians," from which I have just quoted, he describes the old house that stood on this property: "shingled all over, gray and slightly collapsing, which looked down from a steep bank at the top of wooden steps." In front of the house stood two mulberry trees, bearing testimony to the attempt, made many years before, to introduce the cultivation of silkworms into this country. Beyond the mulberry trees, and the road that ran in front of them, a stretch of meadow land sloped down to the water's edge, and behind the house a clump of pine trees mingled their fragrance with the smell of the salt sea. In this pine wood stood the secret of Marion's charm, a square stone building, once an oil refinery and before that a place for the conversion of sea water into salt; now turned into a delightful studio. Rebuilt, and with a huge stone chimney designed by Stanford White added, it made an adequate and picturesque workroom, where my mother painted and my father read manuscripts and wrote. In the evening their friends and neighbors assembled here; and here were held many happy, care-free, and unconventional gatherings so dear to my father's heart. In one corner stood a large frame covered with a thin netting, behind which, at a moment's notice, it



THE STUDIO AT MARION



was my mother's delight to pose living pictures. There were charades and theatricals of all sorts, supposedly for the amusement of the children, but in which the grown-ups took a very lively interest. My father was himself a star performer; for had he not made his début, years before, as the original and incomparable Captain Kidd in "Mrs. Jarley's Wax-Work Show," conducted with such success by Miss Harwood? The "Jarley Days," dating back to Bordentown and his early youth, were partly revived at Marion, for here again he performed the difficult and exacting rôle of Captain Kidd — falling on his face at the appointed moment with such completeness and effect that one wondered how any wax-work figure, to say nothing of any human being, could survive the shock.


Congenial and appreciative visitors were never lacking at these Studio festivities, especially later on when the friends, who had come first as guests in my father's house, returned to settle in the vicinity and became permanent members of the community. Jefferson lived at Buzzards' Bay, as, later, did the Clevelands. Mrs. Schuyler Van Rensselaer returned year after year, and General Greely lived near by. Here came, to rejoice in the hospitality of the Studio hearth, Saint-Gaudens and Henry James, Professor Royce, Mr. Charles Dana Gibson, Mr. and Mrs. L. Clarke Davis and their son Richard Harding, and many others.

"Well!" exclaimed a friend to my mother as they

stood together in the doorway of the Studio one summer afternoon, "you seem to have every one here, at one time or another. I should not be surprised to see the Emperor of China arrive!" At that moment the Marion stage, far off its appointed route, lumbered up the driveway to the Studio, and there descended from its musty depths, not, indeed, the Emperor of China, but the distinguished Oriental, Okakura Kakuzo, in full Japanese regalia!

Among those who most frequently took advantage of the freedom and informality of the life at Marion were President and Mrs. Cleveland, whose friendship with my father and mother began at about this time. This friendship, which Dr. van Dyke speaks of as "equally honorable to both men, so different in temperament and training, so alike in their fearless allegiance to conscience and their desire to serve the plain people," had its roots in my father's admiration for Mr. Cleveland's character and ideals, and it was cemented by the personal intimacy that grew up between the two families after my father's first meeting with Mrs. Cleveland in the summer of 1887.

In June of that year he went to Wells College to deliver the commencement address, and there he met the young bride of the White House. Escorting her back to Washington, he was presented to the President. Later in the same summer Mrs. Cleveland and her mother came to Marion for a visit, bringing



that little town into unwonted prominence; for the President's young wife was so romantic, so charming a figure, that even with the greatest effort her goings and comings could not be kept a secret. When she left, to resume her duties as First Lady of the Land, my father went with her as far as Philadelphia, assisting there at a very large public reception given to the President and his wife. Writing home he says:—

“I have had a very jolly and successful time — constantly in the pleasantest places, and at Mr. Childs's, who was so kind, and affectionate even, and gave me everywhere the best places. In the special train he made me stay in Mrs. Cleveland's car with Bishop Potter, General and Mrs. Sheridan, Admiral Luce, ex-President Hayes, Secretary Bayard, the Lamonts, Mr. Fairchild, etc. I was behind the scenes a large part of the time, and no reporting of one's motions, as at Marion. Mrs. Cleveland was all the time wishing you were here.

“In the atmosphere of roses which I have been breathing you must not be surprised if I have had a new and pleasant conviction of actually being a poet! It is curious to find people knowing one's verses and regarding them as literature — as, moreover, something of importance to themselves. This conviction has in part taken the form of two poems which I am selfish enough to keep from you till my return. One, of course, is to H. I. H. — sometimes known as ‘Frank,’ sometimes as Mrs. Cleveland —

or, rather, it is about her class flower, the pansies. The second is to [H. de K. G.] and will make you **krinkle!** I don't often dote on my own love-lorn lines, but **this** has a turn to it which quite touches me — and **will**, if new in literature, be mighty jolly. No, I won't **send** it to you! I want to see you read it."

To Mrs. Cleveland he wrote on his return to Marion: —

September 22, 1887.

I am not now so desperately sorry H. did not come to Washington. In the same space of time I have never known her to do so much and such effective painting, especially two sketches of the children. She has carried to virtual completion, at a bound, the most enchanting little picture of George, standing in a "fairy ring" of toadstools. (In the grove there is a ring which is attributed to your touch.) He is holding a shell to his ear, — a pretty trick of his, — and the sketch has caught both the likeness and the feeling to a remarkable extent. Then there is a flower piece, and, with some other studies, a nearly life-sized picture of Dorothea, put firmly on the canvas in its first painting, standing among the reeds with bare feet, and hair and dress blown out by the wind. This will take lots of work, but the beginning is one of the most promising H. has ever made. She will take it to town, and perhaps you can see it there while she is working on it.



INTERIOR OF STUDIO AT MARION

Mrs. Glider

Mrs. Cleveland

R. W. G.

Mrs. Jefferson

Joseph Jefferson

Mrs. Perrine

1

2

From this first visit others followed. The President came, after due inquiry as to the fishing in the neighborhood of Marion, and took a cottage next door to my father's. Later he bought a place at Buzzards' Bay, near the Jeffersons and within easy sailing distance of Marion.

"The book of one's life," wrote my father,¹ "is divided into few or many volumes; some may be unhappy, some full of romance and the joy of life. Mr. Cleveland's question about the fishing possibilities of Marion waters proved to be the opening of a volume brimming with unalloyed pleasure for a little group of friends — Cleveland, Jefferson, Jefferson's eldest son Charles (our manager and provider), that knightly figure, too early dead, Governor Russell; the modest and genial Sandy Wood (Jefferson's friend); our sometime companion, the actor Lawrence Barrett; and L. Clarke Davis of Philadelphia."

Stevenson in New York

To H. G.

NEW YORK, September 25, 1887.

I found a note from Joe, saying that Stevenson was at the hotel and would see me. He was in bed, but received me, and I had quite a long chat with him. I called afterwards on Saint-Gaudens and Low.

Dined last night at Low's — and spent the evening

. ¹ *Cleveland, A Record of Friendship*, by R. W. Gilder.

with Stevenson — still in bed. This time I got at him! What an interesting, genial, subtle nature! I don't suppose he would ever charm me as much as he does Low and James, but he is unaffected, bright and interesting.

September 29, 1887.

I have spent another hour or two with Stevenson. His mother called and left word he would like to see me again. He was up and dressed; alone at first, and then Mr. and Mrs. Low and his mother. He was full of animation and vigor. If you think me restless, what would you think of him? Pacing the room; sitting down only for a minute at a time. How very interesting he was! We talked about Gosse among other things.

There was a story current at the time to the effect that when Stevenson came to America on his first trip, he had gone into the office of the "Century," then "Scribner's," and had not been received with open arms. He had no introductions, was just off an immigrant ship, and on his way to the immigrant train in which he travelled west. He was in New York only a few hours, and he did not submit any manuscript, so it would have been difficult for the most astute clerk in the world to know who or what he was. Writing to Mr. Talcott Williams about this tale, my father says: —



October 12, 1887.

I have no doubt that Stevenson used the expression "fired out" with reference to his experience in our old office. That is the term he and I used in talking the thing over, the other evening. I had three delightful visits in his room by his invitation, — two of them very long visits, — and that among other things was freely discussed. I remember asking him who it was that "fired him out." (In point of fact, of course, nobody fired him out.) He looked at me with a quizzical expression and said: "I don't know but it was you. Yes," he said, "I think it was you, now that I look at you."

I said, "O, pshaw, now! Dr. Holland was a large likeness of me; it might have been he."

"No," he said, "I think it was you."

"Well," I said, "see here, now, when was this?"

He said it was in July.

I said, "It might have been me, if it was in July; but of what year?"

"1879."

"Hurrah!" said I, "that lets me out." And I jumped up with great delight, for as you know I was in Europe from March, 1879, to June, 1880. Between you and me and the lamp-post I have no doubt I would have made the same answer to him as was made — whatever that answer was. He brought no manuscript, and simply wanted to write for the magazine. He does n't seem to remember the words

of the conversation. For all that is known, he may have been asked to submit something, although he does n't say so. Of course, any answer to such a vague and unintroduced application would have to be of the vaguest. He said he was rather surprised at getting in, even, as he had no letter of introduction.

To another friend

Never mind! Mrs. Stevenson tells me that if I had seen Louis I would have turned him out! She says he looked the part; and every one did turn him out! Was it a dig or a compliment when she said likewise that I reminded her of him!

The Lincoln Life-Mask

To Homer Saint-Gaudens

March 25, 1909.

In the winter of 1886 I was calling on Wyatt Eaton, who was then living on the south side of Washington Square, and on his table I was amazed to notice a mask of Lincoln. I had never heard of it and, in fact, at this time it was quite unknown. I asked him where he got it, and he said that Douglas Volk had given it to him in Paris, it having been taken by Mr. Volk's father, the sculptor, Leonard W. Volk, who also took Lincoln's hands. This was the now famous life-mask. I thereupon got up a little committee, consisting of Thomas B. Clarke, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, R. W. Gilder, and Erwin Davis. Our circular, I notice,

was dated, New York, February 1, 1886. We raised by subscription enough money to purchase the original cast, which we presented to the National Museum at Washington, where it has ever since been on exhibition. Including the committee there were thirty-three subscribers. Among the names I note those of Henry Irving, Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, J. Q. A. Ward, and John Hay. Every subscriber had a cast, either in plaster or in bronze. Your father took charge of the casting, and those in bronze contain a statement, including the names of the subscribers.

Later I noticed in the window of Fowler & Wells on Broadway a second life-mask of Lincoln, taken during his administration and after he had let his beard grow. I informed Mr. Hay of this and he bought the original from the son of the sculptor.

Your father was, of course, greatly helped by the Volk life-mask in his modelling of the head of Lincoln. He sent for me to look at the small model of the first Chicago statue, in his studio, and asked me what I thought of it. I said to him, "What do *you* think of Lincoln?" He replied, "I take him to be a good man, a benevolent, kind man, called upon to take a great executive office." "But," I said, "how about a prophet, a poet, a dreamer, called upon to take a great executive office?" He said, "What else shall I read of his?" I loaded him up with more of Lincoln's writings, and later he sent for me again. A change had come over the statuette. The only thing I was sure of was that

he had thrown the head down a little, giving that contemplative look which is so fine, and so characteristic of Lincoln.

I don't know whether you are aware of the fact that the "Century" had a death-mask made of Garfield's face and hand, which we presented to the widow without even retaining a copy of either for ourselves. Our only expression of a wish in the matter was that they should ultimately become the property of the Government.

Commencement Addresses

In speaking of my father's first meeting with Mrs. Cleveland, at Wells College, in 1887, I mentioned that he went there to deliver the commencement address. This paper, on "Certain Tendencies in Current Literature," had been read the month before at Wesleyan University. He had been induced to overcome his innate dislike of appearing on a public platform by Professor Atwater's urgency and by the memory of his father's connection with this particular institution. From this beginning a new field of public service opened out to him. He never considered himself a speaker, although he gave in all some thirty-five set addresses. He felt a sort of amused surprise at finding himself lecturing to college assemblies, in view of his complete innocence of any kind of college training.

Writing to Professor Atwater, after accepting his

invitation to speak to the undergraduates at Wesleyan, he explains that —

“The reason I am bold enough to hope to come is, that the other night something of an ideal-practical nature occurred to me to say to your young men, and I hastily jotted down some notes not yet elaborated. My particular desire to do as you wish goes back to the fact of my father’s temporary connection with the University. If he were living, I know it would please him; and how do I know that it will not, now that he is not living? Whether it will be necessary to patch out the occasion with words of others, I cannot yet tell, but suspect it may be. I can easily let you know, however, and any of your people can come to the rescue. For instance, it would be very agreeable to me if what I say should suggest anything in the way of comment or criticism by Mr. Winchester.”

“May 12, 1887.

“Suppose we say the evening of Wednesday, the 25th? The subject of the conversation may be put down as ‘Certain Tendencies in Current Literature.’ What I mean to do is to make a plea for the ideal; but this would be a poor title, and would give the motive of the address away at the outset. I can tell *you*, however, that I will first have something to say upon the controversy on the subject of reality and ideality in literature, and will wind up with a little


piece of unpublished verse of my own, which, though not written for, is appropriate to, the occasion. I have become quite interested in my theme, but cannot yet tell just how long the reading of my little paper will take.

"If you will give me a small hall or lecture room, instead of a great big church where I will be scared and lost, I will try to make a familiar talk, and one not uninteresting to those who care for modern literature. Not that I am going to criticize authors by name, but only tendencies. It will be, I suppose, a kind of lay sermon, although I cannot claim to be even a layman. I am quite fired with the idea of saying something that may give some of your young men a stir; a striving after the unattainable and the impossible.

"After I get through I hope you and your professor of literature will feel like getting up, and either criticizing or backing up what I shall say. How does this programme strike you?

"I shall be alone, and if convenient will gladly accept your kind invitation and that of Mrs. Atwater. It is understood that the 'lecturer' expects no fees; he also begs the privilege of paying his own expenses."

Although this was my father's first appearance as a lecturer, he had, the year before, taken part in a college commencement; that time, however, as a poet. In the spring of 1886 he read to the graduating class of



Smith College his just finished poem, "Mors Triumphalis." In making the arrangements he expressed his dismay at the thought of the ordeal, but when the time came he summoned courage to carry out his part of the exercises.

To a member of the Class of '86

February 3, 1886.

I will do as you wish. The piece itself is not very long, and when I come up perhaps it will be time to decide whether I shall venture upon the reading myself, or fall back upon Professor Churchill, or some other humane person. The very fact that I can, in an emergency, do this will ease my mind on the subject. I have read to a church full of people, but not my own verses; that is the awful thought. While I tremble at this thought, at the same time there seems to me something ridiculous about having another person read one's verses, while a sign-post is put up, pointing at the timorous and unhappy minstrel who cannot raise a tune!

ROUND HILL, June 23, 1886.

Since saying good-bye to you at noon to-day I have had a visitation from what Dr. Huntington this morning called "the muse." The sonnet ["Undying Light"] is so newly born that it has n't even a name, but as it was suggested by the scenery of your "Alma Mater" (or at least of Round Hill, which I take to

be a part of the college grounds, essentially if not legally), I thought that you might possibly like to show it to your comrades of '86 — or to any of them who, you think, might care for it — at their meeting to-night.

You have all been so hospitable and in every way thoughtful and kind to your adopted Laureate, that you must let me again thank you — all of you — for one of the greatest pleasures of my life — though the pleasure was, as you know, not altogether unaccompanied by a chastening trepidation.

These two poems, together with a number of others, were printed in a new edition of all his works, published in 1887, under the imprint of the Century Company.

"I shall publish all my poems in three volumes," he wrote in March, 1887, "in cloth and also in a cheap paper edition, for I have a desire to try to reach my own generation as numerously — and helpfully — as possible. The volumes will be 'The New Day,' 'The Celestial Passion' (a sequel and companion volume to 'The New Day'), and 'Lyrics.'"

Trips to Gettysburg and Washington

My father's chief public interest during these years was his work in behalf of international copyright. This necessitated frequent trips to Washington during the winter of 1887-88, though his journeys there were

not exclusively on business. His growing friendship with the President took him to the White House very often. My mother usually accompanied him on these pleasant excursions, and sometimes one or other of the children as well. In the spring he attended the great reunion at Gettysburg — as the following letters describe: —

To H. G.

June 12, 1888.

Godkin asked me to go with himself, Curtis, and a lot of fellows like that, about ten, — in a special car from the 30th of June to the 2d or 3d of July, — to attend the great reunion at Gettysburg. Curtis is to orate. Forty thousand men are to be there: the greatest reunion since the war! I accepted "subject to your approval" — though I did n't say that to Godkin!! The main trouble is the Aus der Ohes — I would miss a part of their visit, I fear; but under the circumstances — the *uniqueness* of the event — it seems a pity to miss the opportunity. George Parsons Lathrop is the poet, and the President reads Lincoln's speech.

To Francis C. Barlow

June 18, 1888.

And as for cigars, I never smoked one in my life, although I have distinct and melancholy memories of having smoked parts of two different cigars at

long intervals of years; but I can probably manage a packet of cigarettes inside of the four days with some help from leading Mugwumps. Apollinaris is my favorite tippie, but I will not promise to totally abstain from ice-water, claret, and other friends of humanity.

To Charles G. Leland


June 13, 1888.

Let me tell you that I have just returned from Gettysburg. I went with a party consisting of Mr. Curtis, Mr. Godkin, General Barlow, and others, and we stayed three days in our palace car. You may imagine how interesting it was to pass from Harrisburg, somewhat over the line of our march and of our really severe experiences of 1863. The battlefield, as you know, is one of the most remarkable in the world, nearly nine miles of military lines being marked by monuments of the various organizations which took part in the struggle on the Northern side, with monuments to some of the Southern regiments also; and drives being laid out along the lines of intrenchments.

To J. G. Nicolay

July 5, 1888.

I was at Gettysburg the other day, and read a poem at the dedication of a monument to the regiment to which my father belonged. Gettysburg is a wonderful place. Aside from things attached to my



father's presence there during the battle, the Lincoln interest was deepest in my mind. We militia fellows at Carlisle, I find, were doing good service and held some of Ewell's forces a while away from Meade, so I claim a part in the glory of that day. I find that nearly every one on the Union side was the pivot of the whole situation, so I feel as though I had a right to be a pivot as much as any one else.

Your pivotal friend,

R. W. GILDER.

My father discovered on this trip that his short term of service made him eligible for membership in the G.A.R., with which he had been in no way identified before, and soon after his return he became a member of Lafayette Post No. 41.

Immediately on his arrival in New York he was greeted with far less pleasant news.

Fire in the "Century" Office

To H. G.

July 7, 1888.

The fire we have always feared, coming down from those confounded binderies, burnt us out last night — my room most of all. Good luck saved the most important things in the room, the most important manuscripts; and none of the accepted manuscripts are touched, and the magazine will not be delayed a day. But we must seek new quarters, though the address is the same.

The notes for my Italian poem were miraculously saved — though the box was burned that contained them. I am having photographs made of my room — the mantel is gone, all the books, my desk (though some papers in it are saved). The other editorial room is also a wreck — and the art room is burned, but not all that is in it: — an immense deal is saved, and the most important things. My Irving is burned, but Mr. Drake's oil picture is saved. I had my army discharge paper on my desk, but it is only partly burned.

I shall go to Pittsfield Wednesday to spout there, at 11 A.M., on the Development of Southern Literature.

I can arrange to be in Marion when Mrs. C. is there, and on the whole I hope my plans won't be greatly interfered with. The magazine matters were all in good shape and little of consequence has disappeared. You know we have a good deal at the Safe Deposit — and in the safe at the office — and at De Vinne's.

Not much real bother to War Book, Art Rooms, or Dictionary, either.

The office was soon restored, enlarged, and made more comfortable. His own room was at the back of the building, reached through a series of offices where the group of faithful assistants and stenographers, which he called his "Amazon Guard," watched over the goings and comings of strangers and friends. Here he had his high mahogany desk (the "Old

Cabinet"), his writing-table and armchair, his books and letter files lining the walls, and in one corner, dear to the memory of the small children who penetrated to this distant world, a huge green globe, hung on pivots and revolving delightfully at the slightest touch. The office remained very much the same during his lifetime, and indeed, until 1915, when the Century Company left its Union Square quarters and moved farther uptown.

Second Cleveland Campaign

The rest of the summer of 1888 was passed pleasantly enough. Part of the time he was at Marion. Mrs. Cleveland and her mother were there, and when they left he accompanied them to Oak View for a visit to the President.

"I spent nearly three days there," he wrote to a friend, "and enjoyed every moment of the time, as you may well believe. How much I wish you could hear him talk, hour after hour, as I have. You would, I am sure, sympathize still more with my sense of his sincerity and the disinterestedness of his aims. His interest in the campaign¹ does not seem to me like that of other candidates for high office I have been with; it is 'the cause,' as he understands it, that moves him, and his talk has a solemn earnestness. His watchfulness over large issues dignifies his attention, so close and conscientious, to detail."

¹ Mr. Cleveland's second campaign for the Presidency.

To H. G.

OAK VIEW, August 3, '88.

Well, we all four drove out yesterday afternoon, and you would hardly know the drive or the place itself, — *this* place I mean, — so umbrageous, so bowery it is now. The oak grove is really a grove, and not a row or two of trees. We sat there this morning quite in Marion fashion discussing, in the usual way, the last year, and always *you*. The more intimate one gets with our new friends, the more "comfortable," natural, and generous they seem.

Last night I was with the President from five to eleven — the last part of the time alone with him, F. F. C. sitting outside, lonely, and, she said, "cross" at being left by the rest of us. The President was extremely interesting and most generous, confidential, and kind. When we went into his study he read to me extracts from all his presidential deliverances, gathered together in proofs for a "campaign book." He discussed (earlier) his forthcoming Letter of Acceptance (it was his *Speech* of Acceptance that was delivered a few weeks ago). During the evening I ventured to tell him what I knew of the feeling of Curtis and the other Independents. He was very kind and frank about it, and spoke very appreciatively of Curtis.

To-day Mrs. Cleveland and Mrs. Folsom suggested that I should wait over and do my work here and not hurry back for the half-day (Saturday) at the

office. I looked over my bag and made sure there was plenty for me to do, — proofs, manuscripts, etc., that had accumulated in Marion, — and that no time would then be lost before Monday morning, and said that if the President would join in the invitation, and if they would let me really work, I should be only too delighted to remain. F. F. C. at once made the President come to the telephone; he “cordially responded,” and in a few minutes I will be “hard at it” reading proofs and manuscripts.

This visit has been particularly valuable and delightful to me. The President when at Oak View is even more jolly and kind and confidential than at the White House. I don't like to put on paper what he told me, but it was more interesting and confidential than ever, and led me to like and respect and honor him more than ever before. Is it not curious that I should have struck the White House first on the eve of the famous and epoch-making Message, and now, by sheer accident, have been here while his anxiously awaited and most important Letter of Acceptance is in preparation? He took me fully and generously into his confidence about it, and kept reading me parts of it during the day while it was being written. It is a very simple, direct, manly, and statesmanlike document. He evidently liked to talk it over, mainly to get his own ideas into shape, rather than to call out the ideas of his guest and friend. But he was, all the same, very thoughtful and generous about the slightest sug-

gestion. I shall read it in its final shape with, of course, a very novel and keen interest.

On reaching Marion again my father wrote to his hostess: —

August 16, 1888.

I have just spent the night at Joe Jefferson's; he was as angelic as ever, and speaks of yourself and the President always with that refinement of praise that honors the praised doubly — with that deep respect mingled with an affectionate tone, free of familiarity, that makes one feel like taking off one's hat whenever he says "The President" or "Mrs. Cleveland." Mrs. Jefferson was as kind and good as always. Edwin Booth arrived when I was there, and we all drove off to see an old, old house, where to my intense surprise I bought a wooden wagon, of curious pattern, built in 1824.

NEW YORK, September 18, 1888.

Since you have "eased your pain" by confessing the non-success of your appeal, let me make an identical confession. I was lately asked to "sound" some one — and his answer is silence. Don't let us mind. Begging is the Devil's own, if you will permit the profanity. I simply can't do it — I would rather steal, if stealing were not distinctly immoral and tending to the elimination of personal freedom.

You know how miserable I am away from H. — unless I am having an extraordinarily giddy and pre-

occupied time — and sometimes even then. So my letters from Marion and elsewhere are now my principal sustainers. I wonder if one does not grow more selfish as times goes on. I fear I do. I *do*.

Your confession about political prospects greatly interested me. I am deep in it — day and night. What troubles me is the ineffectiveness of so many good men. The Mugwumps as a class are hereabouts really very effective. They know what they want and mean to have it if they can. But there are so many just men who are neither downright blind partisans, nor “independents,” nor effective citizens in any emergency. One of these weaklings — a celebrated thinker and writer — came to me to-day for light — came to *me*, think of it. An old fellow who ought to know the whole business and old enough to be my father. His heart was in the right place and his head was, in the main, right, but his hand was feeble and his action doubtful. I am going to send him my editorial, to make him vote right, if the power is in me. He is in a “doubtful state” (in a double sense).

September 24, 1888.

Politics are clearing up every day — and every day things are looking better. Do you know what I want? — Success, victory, triumph — but a pure triumph — a campaign so noble that defeat will be honorable to all time. That is the kind of campaign that we seem to be having. The address of the National Commit-

tee is in good tone. A gentleman said to me to-day, "How finely the President and Mrs. Cleveland are acting in this campaign." It is so. "A nation waits and prays," not in vain!

ELECTION EVE, 1888.

If brains and common sense were to settle this affair, it would be already settled. In thought we are with you all constantly.

Nearly midnight of November 6, 1888.

I have just come back from headquarters at the Victoria. It is evident that it will be hours before a decision is reached, — if not days, — and it looks as if it would be unfortunately close, with possible defeat for all we care for most. Earlier in the evening, when bad news came, I went through it all and came out of the disappointment and disgust with a certain resignation; but when I heard some good news, and afterwards bad, I found there was not as much philosophy in me as I supposed. When, in front of the Republican headquarters, the crowd cheered a picture first of the new President, as they believed, and then of old money-bags — and then of the House Beautiful! a pang went through me, and I could not stand it any longer. Now we must sleep with this infernal uncertainty. But failure in the right is not failure; constantly when I face the possibility of failure, apparent and immediate, for this great leader in a great cause, my anger flames; and then I am con-

soled by the thought of his image rising up in history one of the great spirits, one of the brave, devoted patriots of a great country.

Some time ago I heard one of his followers in New York say that his failure in reëlection, after that message, would do more for the country than even reëlection. It may be so, but how with all my heart and H.'s heart I hope for happy tidings in the morning. Whatever happens or has happened, you both have our loyal affection.

November 7, 1888.

Well, perhaps a four years' rest before coming back to the White House for four years more, is better after all! You both need a good, long vacation, and as eight years only is allowed, a four years' vacation is not a bad idea. Our hearts are with you in your great victory over selfishness and sordidness, and all things that are mean and ignoble. The man in Albany! poor creature! thinks that he is successful, and that the President is not: whereas he has only a conspicuity of infamy, while the President has written his name among the names that are not born to die.

We are so hoping for a glimpse of you. Perhaps you would cheer us up a bit, for I feel sore. There are times when every evil thing seems to come to the surface — but they are only times, not eternities.

It took defeat to prove beyond cavil the devotion of the President — his singleness of aim — in his

leadership of a forlorn hope. He has compelled both parties to march to the tread of his leadership.

Editorial

Underlying all my father's other interests, whether personal or public, was his interest in and his work for the magazine. The War Series and the "Life of Lincoln" were the most important undertakings of this time, but even they were far from absorbing the editors' entire attention. Of the national issues in which the "Century Magazine" bore a part, of its aims and ambitions, not only in art and literature, but in civic betterment and public service, the following letters seem to me to give an interesting expression. They touch on various subjects,—the War Series, the anti-pension crusade, the Jefferson biography; and finally a few only chosen from the mass of correspondence on the "Life of Lincoln."

To Edmund Gosse

July 30, 1885.

What you say about the War is duly noted. We know it all. We will do the best we can under the circumstances. The Battles cannot stop till probably *next October* — a year. But we will give all the variety we can and as it happens there will be a good deal about England. We will send you a prospectus when we have fully determined upon it, and will, in fact, make up a special one for England.

What you say about the delay of articles is wickedly true. We are trying to reform by not accepting. We cannot honestly place the Harvard article for eighteen months or two years. We must not take it; it is of local interest in New England — I suggest the "Atlantic" for the article — and perhaps Houghton — or some other Boston firm for the book.

Can't you suggest a way of stirring up an interest among literary men about our war articles? I know they don't "think highly" of our war, but, after all, there was considerable of a war!

July 31.

I take another sheet to scold you on. Is there nothing interesting to you but art and literature? Now let me tell you — I would rather have one article by Grant on a battle won by him, I would rather read it — print it — publish it — than twenty articles by Daudet on Mistral. And yet I know all the Provençals — one of the happiest times of my life was the few days spent among them. Daudet is enthusiastic, but not enough for me. Provence, Avignon, — they are among the magic words for me. But Heavens! a great world, changing, heroic events told by the hero of it! The conquering of the Rebellion meant not only the extinction of human slavery over a vast territory, but it meant the salvation of the great experiment of self-government in the New World. Grant was the leading military figure in that crisis,

the most important that the world has ever known — Beauregard, Johnston, etc., were among his leading opponents — these men are all telling, in a more intimate manner than ever before, the story of their deeds. McClellan too, Porter, and a score of other generals, whoever has some new chapter to add, or old one to fill out. Yes, bloody, indeed; all wars are, alas, bloody, and there is no blood in my sonnet nor in Dobson's song that you like. But is there nothing stirring in blood, in heroism, in devotion to a political and moral conviction? You ought to be proud of a magazine that is conducting to unparalleled success the largest enterprise yet undertaken by a periodical. Don't let literature and art make dilettanti of us! Suppose that thirty years after Waterloo all Wellington's generals — and the marshals of the dead Napoleon, had written out, in a familiar way, the stories of their campaigns and battles. How bloody it would have been — and how genuine a piece of journalism if any magazine could have published that war series! It is not for us to discriminate against ourselves in the relative importance of those and these campaigns. There were brave men in both periods and I would like to hear them tell of their great wars.

To Mrs. Cleveland

August 19, 1888.

Will you sympathize with R. in a new "success" in which personal friendship and personal enthusiasm

unite to make him well pleased? After several years of doubt — and strong pressure in other directions, and much perplexity — of a curious kind only to be explained in conversation — he has secured for the magazine the “best thing” (new, I mean) available in these present years — namely, the publication of Joseph Jefferson’s delightful biography. The “terms” made by me were ratified last night by telegram from Mr. Roswell Smith, our publisher, though an advance over those he had generously offered. These terms are surprisingly good — I mean for J. J. — so I have the satisfaction of knowing that he has done well by following the dictates of his heart — for he wanted us to have it, I know.

To the editor of a Western newspaper

May 14, 1887.

Will you let me say to you privately and personally, that it is astonishing to me that any one could doubt the tone and purpose of the “Century” in national matters. We edit, not for a single number, but for years. If you have the bound “Century” in your office, will you not turn back to the editorial in the magazine for October, 1886, on “The Authorized Life of Abraham Lincoln.” You will learn from that something of our motives in editing the “Century.” We try not to be patriots for revenue only. If we were sordid in our aims we would not, on the one hand, antagonize the soldier audience by an appeal to their

better nature with regard to the pension craze, and, on the other hand, endanger our entire Southern circulation by publishing the "Life of Lincoln," which goes into politics more deeply and dangerously than any serial ever published in a magazine for general circulation, so far as I am aware.

June 3, 1887.

It is strange that people who are after hard cash from the Government should suspect the motives of those who are acting conscientiously as we were in our editorial in the expression of views hostile to such money-getting. The suspicion in reality is all the other way. When I stood up before a rebel cannon I did not make a pauper of myself by that act, and I am on the side of those Union soldiers who believe in pensions, but not in these wholesale attacks on the public treasury. Now, who takes the more disinterested ground? The money-grabbers will have a hard time boycotting the "Life of Abraham Lincoln" in a country that great man made forever free.

June 15, 1887.

I see you have taken for yourself my allusion to other persons. The boycott talk does not come from your office. If it had, you would not have been asked to print my letter. Your tone is entirely different, and I respect both you and your opinion, and hope you will never feel that the "Century" or its edi-

tor resents such sincere criticism as yours. I wished merely to correct a startling misstatement (in my public note, which I thank you for printing) and in my second letter I referred to certain attempts to injure the business of this Company, in order to bring its editor in line with certain opinions which he holds to be selfish and unpatriotic — not selfish and unpatriotic by any means, as held by disinterested parties! — but so in their essence and origin.

It is astonishing that honest men cannot see that the safety of our institutions lies in the freedom of the press — that all boycotting is tyranny, but that boycotting printed opinion is the rankest and most dangerous in a society like ours.

The "Century's" editors can claim no special virtues or abilities, but there is something it may be in our position, having private correspondence and readers watching developments, enterprises, etc., etc., in every part of the country, that makes us dwell especially in our minds and in our work upon *national identity*: the sooner the whole country feels and accepts the unity of the whole, the sooner will we realize our enormous national responsibility. I do not speak especially of North and South, but of East and West, Southeast and Northwest, New York and Iowa, New Jersey and Oregon, etc., etc. You as an editor know and feel these things, and expressing yourself frankly and constantly on public subjects, you must and do know that this is a matter weighing with unusual

heaviness upon the conscience and heart of those who come each month before not less than a million readers. We are all liable to mistakes, but we should not ascribe sordid or personal motives to those who risk everything in the spreading of what they consider patriotic and timely warnings. One of the greatest dangers before us is the growing passion on the part of large masses for a share of the immense surplus at the Government's command, and when we see politicians on all sides seizing upon this passion, for their own private advancement and popularity, it is the time, is it not, for the press (which is the true "watch-dog of the Treasury") to be on the alert and not to let sympathy take the place of statesmanship.

You wrote in your letter a personal point against my power of appreciating the needs of soldiers. But I have lived in camp with my father, and have served in a campaign as a private when a boy, and besides have known what it is to have the head of the house, the bread-winner, taken away by a soldier's death. That death threw a large family on my shoulders and the Government pittance to my mother, though welcome, was of comparatively little help. My life has been a struggle for existence, owing to this early loss — my burdens (not of my immediate household) have only lately at all lifted, and far from being the pampered person you suppose, I know all about it! Money from my own pocket goes to the soldiers — but — \$60,000,000 a year already from the Government —

and always more — more — more — is it not frightening?— has it not an unmanly side, a communistic side?

There — you have by your kind letter called forth a too long screed.

If you are ever in New York, come and see me. I wonder if you began at the reporters' desk as I did — and have the delight and pride in journalism and interest in all that journalism does.

Life of Lincoln

To J. G. Nicolay

June 11, '85.

I have been thinking a great deal about your book lately. I have a scheme in mind which is not yet definite enough for me to ask Mr. Roswell Smith to put it in the form of a proposition, but I will nevertheless mention it to you.

You said if we printed any of the book in the magazine we would want the cream of it and this you would not like. But I have another idea — not to take the cream, but to take the whole! — and to make you (the authors) such a proposition therefor that any possible slip up on the book sale would be more than discounted. For the book might be reserved only those long and dull documents, if any there be, which add dignity and value to a literary volume, but which the ordinary reader skips.

Before any such definite proposition were made it

would be necessary for me to get a clear idea of the book, with your permission. I should indeed prefer to read the whole thing rapidly. I think that the book could be published in the magazine inside of twenty-four months beginning one year from next November — by that time it would doubtless be quite finished by the authors. We could illustrate with a few *real* pictures, I mean pictures of persons and places, which could be used in the book or not as you preferred, or as might be determined upon.

If your object is that Lincoln's story should reach this generation, how could it better be accomplished? As for remuneration for your long and faithful labors, that would be assured from the beginning; then would come the further profit and the full-blown historical and literary dignity of library volumes. A further consideration would be the opportunity of correcting possible errors and enriching the volumes with material elicited by serial publication.

To Edmund Gosse


November 2, 1885.

With regard to the "Life of Lincoln," of which Mr. Smith has told you *in confidence*, I may add that the capture of this by the Century Company is considered by us a matter of great self-congratulation. Some months ago I made up my mind that this was the thing that would naturally succeed our War Series. I was backed up in this conviction by both

the editorial and the business departments, and I wrote to the authors, who were Mr. Lincoln's private secretaries, that we wished to publish the whole thing in the magazine, and to pay them a price which would make them never regret having disposed of it in this manner. This summer I spent a couple of weeks up in the mountains by appointment; there met Nicolay, and read five hundred thousand words — about half. It is not only what you might call the secret history of the secession conspiracy, and the inside history of the war, but it also contains a complete, authentic, and logical account of the great political struggle in connection with the subject of slavery. But what gives it its great value, at least in this country, is that it is the authorized — the only authorized life of the greatest man this country has ever produced, — at least since Washington, — and not only the greatest, but by far the most interesting; in interest Lincoln even surpasses Washington. There is nothing so eagerly seized upon by the American public as any authentic anecdote or account of Abraham Lincoln. Now in this history, wherein the story of his life and great work is completely told for the first time, Lincoln looms up an even greater and more important figure than he has hitherto been supposed to be. There seems to have been no fault in his character, no spot upon his wonderful career. I don't know whether you know that Lincoln is now one of the most revered of our public men in the very South whose political

unity he destroyed. They soon felt that in Lincoln's death they lost their best friend. You may have noticed that General Longstreet, who was one of the great leaders of the Southern armies, in a recent number of the "Century" (July, '85) declared that—"Without doubt the greatest man of the Rebellion times, the one matchless among forty millions for the peculiar difficulties of the period, was Abraham Lincoln."

As Mr. Smith told you there has been a struggle to get possession of this book on the part of nearly all the publishers in the country for many years, but he did not tell you how we finally obtained it — which was by his own masterly management. The thing was narrowed between ourselves and one other house which shall be nameless, but Mr. Smith cut the Gordian knot by one magnificent stroke — a princely figure — which was almost immediately accepted, as Nicolay and Hay felt that it was both a just and a generous offer. Was ever an editor more splendidly sustained than in this audacious but statesmanlike action of Mr. Smith. If I had been the other house I would have bought it if it cost twice as much! It is the only thing that we can think of that would be likely to attract away from the "Century" what it now has, namely, the attention of the entire country. In addition to this, the work will have a great moral and political effect in that it will help to unite the North and South as never before, around the story and experiences of the great President.



To John Hay

December 1, 1886.

We have just been sending you a lot of taffy. I send you now another little piece and also a bottle of ipecac. A gentleman of Philadelphia has done you the honor to read your proof with great care. This is very complimentary, but you will be surprised to learn that you have not let Lincoln's heart throb nor let him in his own mind speak to us. If I had thoroughly realized that you had not let Lincoln's heart throb, I should have gone back on the whole affair. But we are in for it now, and must print the biography, throb or no throb. It is surprising also that I did not notice that you failed to bring back the sunshine that shone 'twixt the chinks of the cabin. John Hay, how could you do it! And then you and Nicolay have failed to give the true story of young Lincoln's start in public life. We asked you for something about Lincoln, and evidently you have been writing about somebody else under the name of Lincoln. Now, that is too bad! Could n't you write an appendix telling about Lincoln himself? Moreover, you are found out. You are "rumbling, superficial, discursive," when you ought to be "thought-driven, deep-seeing, and marrow-finding" (not to say gushing, slushing, hog-washing), and it is all because you do not know that:

"We live in deeds, not years, in thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings, not in figures on a dial."

In other words, your lack of familiarity with the "Dictionary of Familiar Quotations" has been your biographical ruin. Brace up, my dear biographer, and tell us something about Lincoln.

To the Authors of the "Life of Lincoln"

January 2, 1890.

Now that the last words of "Abraham Lincoln: A History" have been printed, for our February number, I cannot refrain from expressing, once again, my great satisfaction that the "Century" was permitted to give this work to the contemporaneous world. There is no doubt in my mind, and I trust there is none in yours, that the principal desire of our hearts has been gratified: namely, that not only Lincoln's fame, for all time, has been more firmly established by your labors, but that the people now living, so many of whom were also living during his lifetime, have had an opportunity of knowing the man, such as would never have occurred if the history had appeared only in book form. I think that you feel also as we do, — that the work is all the better for the criticism and the help that has come to you through serial publication. Partisanship has been charged, and doubtless will be charged; but I should think that even those most opposed to certain deductions and remarks of the authors, would recognize the fact that an honest attempt has been made to present the truth as you were convinced of it, and that in so doing you have

not let personal acquaintanceship or good nature interfere with what you believed to be the truth. It may be that future historians, and critics of history, will be less severe in the judgment of some you have thought it right to condemn; — and such historians or critics may be called upon to take into view the “personal equation”; — but when all is said that can possibly be said in criticism the fact will remain that you have followed your convictions, and by your devotion and industry have presented a picture of the man, and of the times, which will have an inextinguishable value. It has been particularly pleasing to me that the history ends with so finely expressed an estimate of Lincoln, as the one given in the chapter on Lincoln’s Fame; — seldom has so much been said in so few and well-chosen words.

CHAPTER VI

INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT

1888-1891

THE Studio on Fifteenth Street, in spite of enlargement and rearrangement, could not indefinitely contain a growing family. In the summer of 1888 my father went house-hunting once again, and after the usual difficulties of such a search decided on No. 55 Clinton Place, which was to be his home for the rest of his life. This house, the designation of which was changed later to No. 13 East Eighth Street, was of the old-fashioned New York type, with high-ceilinged drawing-rooms, mahogany doors set between Ionic columns, and a general air of dignity and comfort characteristic of the houses in the Washington Square neighborhood. Its distinctive feature was the wisteria vine which covered the whole front of the house, filling the rooms in springtime with the fragrance of its blossoms, and in the summer with the coolness of green leaves.

"I go to New York next week," he wrote from Marion, "and go to work at the new house — which is already started — I mean the repairing. This, with the new club which has drafted me in as president, and the Magazine, and my own literary work, will make a pretty busy summer."

From the new house he wrote to Mrs. Cleveland: —

NEW YORK, September 21, '88.

For a very busy man it is astonishing to think how much time I have to be lonely and homesick. I am homesick and fearfully — and, I dare say, unnecessarily worried about some phases of public affairs. How mixed life — and politics — are, how straining to the fibre of the soul if one takes it without cynicism. I hope the President does not get as homesick in your absence as does H.'s husband when away from her. It is a good deal of a comfort to be getting ready our own new house, where I pray the Fates may let us bide together — H. and R. — a while longer in this trying world. Biding together is the only important thing after all.

I hardly dare look forward. With all our dreadful sorrow, we have had so much happiness at 103 that it seems too good to be true that it will continue at 55. But, no, — life is better year by year. Molly said R. was a "happier man" than she had left four and a half years ago. That means that life is richer, year by year, does it not?

We are having a new (old) mantelpiece placed in the front parlor, with a Donatello cast selected with Saint-Gaudens's assistance; and a frame for it built into the chimney by Stanford White — with blue-and-white tiles procured by Joseph Jefferson from Quentin Matsy's house in Antwerp — and the crane

from 103 East Fifteenth Street fireplace (from John Burroughs). The old wooden (Stanford White) chimney from the Studio at 103 has been removed to H.'s bedroom.

The house was ready by November and the family moved in, not without a backward glance of regret for the unique and delightful Studio.

"Do you suppose," Lowell wrote to my mother, "that one who has interested himself in the migrations of the savage hordes, from the Pelasgians down to the Pilgrim Fathers, could be indifferent to those of the Gilders so civilized and amiable and (one of them at least, I don't say which — don't fall out about it) so fair? No, I had heard of it, and followed them in imagination through their flitting till the last cart had rattled out of the courtyard with the last load of household stuff and the last baby atop like the Kobold of legend. I shall not like the new home like the old, I shall miss the excitement of pulling so remote a bell (tinkling in the distant future) and then having the gate open by magic till I don't know whether I am in Italy or Arabia Felix — that of the Nights. I am too old to endure these wrenches of habitual association. But I calm myself with the reflection that I shall like you and him wherever I find you.

"I have loads of letters lying before me and have answered yours first — are you satisfied? Nay, have

I answered it? I have barely alluded to the N.B. I am not going to congratulate *you* — anybody could do that and is deplorably sure of doing it. I congratulate her on the judicious choice she has made of a mother. Few at so tender an age show such maturity of judgment.

"And now farewell and with highest regards to Mr. Gilder,

"Faithfully yours,

"J. R. LOWELL."

Writing to a friend just after they had moved my father says: —

"I wish we could have a quiet evening here in our new home — our new *old* home; for it is one of those old-fashioned New York houses in the neighborhood of Washington Square (just back of the Brevoort) which take in and make immemorably comfortable and at home the newest comer.

"For the first time in my life I have a working room of my own, fit and delightful. Apparently of its own accord it has taken on the color of the deep pine wood — of the summer outdoor Studio where you and I had such a cozy and intimate talk. — how many years ago!"

To Maurice Francis Egan

January 23, 1890:

I might find fault with you no less than you with me, and perhaps better. Why don't *you* write more,


now that you have what some might think the ideal position for a literary worker? Your own best work is so exquisite, and artistic, and individual, that it is a shame that you do not add more to it. As for myself, I am writing verse all the time, and have a whole drawer-full of unpublished poetry, if poetry it may be.

You seem to judge of my social labors by the newspapers. They are not a safe guide. Mrs. Gilder and I went to one ball early in the winter and our names are printed now right along without expense of carriage hire, or late hours. That I am drawn into too many things is perhaps true, although I am constantly fighting such invitations and trying to avoid public engagements. I will give you a sample evening. Last Thursday I dined at home. Like a good citizen, I went to a Ballot Reform meeting; I went to Cooper Union and heard some speeches long enough to have my name counted on the right side; like a good neighbor I went in to see Mr. Drake, who was under the weather; like a good husband, I went home and spent the rest of the evening at my own house; like a good trustee, I wrote some business letters; like a good poet, I wrote a poem on Browning to be read at the Memorial Meeting in Boston; like a good editor, I read manuscripts and went to bed sometime before midnight, having had time to chat with the family, take a cup of tea with Mrs. Foote, who is staying with us, and have a good time generally;—and that is the way it goes.

Fellowcraft Club

He does not mention here his connection with the Fellowcraft Club. He worked hard for three years as its first President, and then, as he notes on the margin of one of the following letters, "insisted upon resigning. J. W. Alexander took my place, but the club soon closed on account of a single candidacy."

Writing to Mr. Lowell in February, 1889, he says: "About a year ago a club was formed here in New York, of journalists of the pen and pencil; it consists of two hundred or more men, most of the active ones on the daily papers of this city — I should say as a rule the best of the crowd. Almost without my knowledge or consent, actually with only a day's notice, I was elected President of the organization. I consented to go into it because I understood that the movement represented, in some vague but actual way, the cause of the better feeling in journalism. The club has proved remarkably successful; it has a clubhouse and all the appurtenances. One of the principal features is a monthly dinner, which begins with a little informal speech-making, and goes on into music, story-telling, etc. A peculiar point of this dinner is its informality, and the fact that although the room is full of reporters the speeches are not reported, only the names being published of those present as guests of the members."




To a friend

My interest in the Fellowcraft Club is, I may say, a patriotic one. The journalists of this city seem to need, and very much to desire, such a club as we are making for them. The last dinner, as you may have heard, was one of the most interesting given in our work. I myself (although, perhaps, I should not say so) have never been present on such a thrillingly interesting occasion. It was really, I suppose, two dinners in one, as those at the Stanley dinner came over and joined ours almost *en masse*.

The Presidency of such a club, or at least the presiding at dinners, is somewhat out of my line. I have done it simply for the supposed good of the Craft, and as I said above, the need for such a club is keenly felt by the best men in the profession.

Lowell and Whitman Dinners

At about this time my father attended the dinner to Walt Whitman, given at Camden in May, 1889, on the occasion of his seventieth birthday, and Lowell's seventieth birthday dinner, in Boston. At the Camden dinner, he sat at the right hand of the guest of honor, and when during the course of his address he said: "I am a stickler for form in literature and one thing that I admire in Walt Whitman is his magnificent form," the Good Gray Poet looked up at him in surprise and murmured, "Well, well, do *you* say that!"



Of the Lowell dinner he wrote to a friend: "When H. heard that I had declined the invitation to the Tavern Club's dinner to Lowell, she made me telegraph that I would come. It seems that Lowell said he wanted me asked, so I go D. V."

"February 25, '89.

"H. was right, it would have been a fearful mistake and a lifelong regret if I had not gone. It was unreported, and the most interesting occasion, almost, at which I have ever been present. To my surprise I was seated at the chairman's (Professor Norton's) left, Mr. Lowell being at his right. Dr. Holmes read an exquisite poem (at 80!) and the speeches were by Norton, Lowell, Judge Holmes, Wayne MacVeagh, and R. W. G.!

"If you and H. could have heard Holmes and Lowell, to say nothing of the other speakers!"

To J. R. Lowell

February 26, '89.

I don't believe that with all your imagination it is thinkable to you how deeply I felt the occasion of which your generous suggestion made me a part. I did n't say in my stammering speech half what I wanted to say, but I suppose the most that you remember about anything that was said was that we all meant you were "a jolly good fellow."

Among other things, it was a great pleasure to me to have so much conversation with Mr. Norton. The

next afternoon I had a delightful talk with him in his own house, where I had never seen him, and which I had never seen before. Talking with him is like talking with an angel. He seems to be outside the battle of life and looks upon poets like you, who are fighting for real things, with a sort of affectionate and angelic disdain.

But surely he is wrong about your not "carrying the banner" for us here in New York at the Centennial.¹ I am not on the Literary Committee or that of the Banquet, but only on the Art Committee, where we are accomplishing some excellent results in bringing into the movement certain art features which will have permanent value. A magnificent medal, for instance, designed by Saint-Gaudens; the first medal of real artistic value made in this country. I hope that in an indirect way it will have an ultimate effect upon our coinage. If, as Mr. Norton would seem to wish, the idealists, the artists, the poets — get themselves into holes because there is no "atmosphere," when is the atmosphere to come? — for it can only come through their presence. He objects to your "amusing" the audience, but what is all art but a noble sort of amusement? Besides, why think of only the little audience that will hear you? Sixty millions of people will know that you have been invited, that there is such a thing as literature, and that

¹ Centennial celebration of Washington's first inauguration in New York, April 30, 1789.

we have a true representative of it. It will be an "object lesson" for *more* than sixty millions, for the attention of not only this country but of all countries will be fixed upon New York next April, at the last of the great Centennials.

Washington Centennial Arch

Here we find him, as he expressed it, "head over heels in centennial business." He was appointed to serve on several sub-committees of the Washington Centennial itself, and later became a member of the permanent committee for the erection of the Washington Arch. This committee had as its object the building of a marble arch to replace the temporary wooden structure which stood at the foot of Fifth Avenue, during the Centennial celebration. Thanks to the untiring efforts of this committee, of which Henry G. Marquand was chairman, W. R. Stewart, treasurer, and my father secretary, Stanford White's beautiful arch now stands as the gateway to Fifth Avenue.

It was no easy matter to raise the necessary funds. It took eight years in all to accomplish the task. During these years my father, as permanent secretary, attended every committee meeting held. The money was raised as much as possible by public subscription, so that the people of the city should feel that they had helped to build this monument to the first President. Every one around my father became imbued with

the Washington Arch fever, from the President and Mrs. Cleveland down to his young son Rodman, who edited and published a miniature newspaper, the proceeds of which were devoted to the arch fund. This paper, called "The Chimney Seat," was the natural successor to my father's own boyhood paper, and he took the greatest interest in its production. He wrote for it a "serio-comical narrative," really a political satire in miniature, called "The Doubly Abstracted Politician," and also a ridiculous tale with which he used to delight his small daughters, beginning, "Once there was an Elephant" — and seldom, if ever, getting any further.

"The Chimney Seat," which must have raised about one hundred dollars towards the necessary one hundred and thirty-three thousand, was obviously not the only means of getting money for the arch. Among others who helped was Paderewski, who was in this country on his first triumphal tour, and generously gave a concert for the benefit of the arch fund.

"We wish now," wrote my father to Paderewski in April, 1892, "to proceed with the medal which Mr. Saint-Gaudens has undertaken to make, commemorative of your visit to this country and of your generous gift to our people.

"The whole proceeds of the Arch Benefit amounted to \$4500. This has greatly encouraged us, and it will not take many thousands now, to complete the arch. In fact, yesterday Mr. Stewart, the treasurer, Mr.

Stanford White, the architect, and myself, climbed up three ladders and laid the last three stones of the structure, while Mrs. Stewart, Mrs. White, and Mrs. Gilder waved their handkerchiefs from below! Our own initials were carved on hidden parts of these stones, and a large P. for Paderewski took its place among the rest. So your initial is built into the very structure of the monument, and as long as the history of the arch is remembered, your generous deed will be kept in mind."

The arch was completed on April 30, 1895, and presented to the city with due ceremony. As a special mark of appreciation for the work he had done in connection with both the arch and the centennial, my father was presented with a Washington Centennial Medal, cast in silver.

"This medal has been designed by Mr. Saint-Gaudens and modelled under his direct supervision by Mr. Philip Martiny," wrote my father. "Like the famous medals of the Italian Renaissance, it is cast and not struck with a die. In the opinion of the Committee it is the most artistic example of the medallic art yet produced in America; in every way worthy of the sculptor by whom it is designed and of the occasion and the man it commemorates."

International Copyright

The question of international copyright, which I merely touched upon in the last chapter, was, how-

ever, my father's most important public interest throughout these years. Officially his connection with it consisted in his membership in the American Copyright League, of which he was one of the three founders, and on the executive council of which he served for many years. Unofficially he carried on a continuous campaign of public instruction and private influence. He kept the subject before the "Century's" wide audience by repeated editorial comment, and by the publication of articles bearing on its various phases. He wrote innumerable letters, and by personal interviews "converted" many people to the cause. Not the least of his services, as Mr. Johnson has himself told me, was his willingness, whenever the occasion arose, to take upon his shoulders the work of his associate editor so that Mr. Johnson could fulfil his duties as Secretary of the Copyright League.

From my father's many letters on copyright matters, I have tried to make a selection which would cover the whole period of the struggle, and touch on each of the successive campaigns. The first bill mentioned, the Dorsheimer, is dated as far back as 1884. On this no action was taken by Congress. In 1886 the Chace Bill was strongly favored by the International Copyright Association, and recommended by many authors, but again no action was taken. Two years later the same bill, somewhat modified, passed the Senate with flying colors, but was blocked in the

House and no action taken upon it. The following year another unsuccessful attempt was made. Finally in March, 1891, after an all-night session, the Chace-Breckinridge International Copyright Bill was voted on favorably by the House, and, on March 4, at 2.30 A.M., it passed the Senate.

To F. T. Frelinghuysen, Secretary of State

November 21, 1884.

I have been asked by other members of the executive committee of the American Copyright League to write to you informally to suggest that you call the attention of the President to the subject of international copyright, in order that he might take into consideration a recommendation to Congress on the subject, — in the line of your note in the opening message.

I dare say the new Administration will be interested in the subject, through Mr. Dorsheimer (whose intimate acquaintance with Mr. Cleveland is well known), but no harm would be done if the present Administration laid still more stress than it already has done upon so important a reform.

Authors and respectable publishers are almost unanimous in asking for international copyright now. The points at issue are mere matters of detail into which it would not be necessary for the President to enter.

To H. E. Scudder

August 9, 1899.

You know we got Lowell to be President of the Copyright League. We sent out for opinions from authors and others which were published in the magazine, and in response to the request for opinions he (Lowell) came into my office one day (with Mr. Norton I think), said he had something in his head, and wanted a pen to write it out; whereupon he sat down and wrote what is now that famous little scorchers,

"In vain we call old notions fudge,
And bend our conscience to our dealing,
The Ten Commandments will not budge
And stealing will continue stealing."

To H. G.

WASHINGTON, D.C., January 28, 1886.

I attended the committee meeting this morning and things did not go very well. We hope that Lowell, who was not here to-day, will be able to put a better face on things at to-morrow's meeting. Joe Gilder and I dine with Mr. Fairchild to-night. Meantime we rush as usual!

January 29, 1886.

The meeting to-day was better: excellent, in fact. Lowell was delicious — what a thing it is to have the power of expression, both literary and oratorical. He did a giant's work for the cause.

Why is it, that I, who hate contention, must always have "my heart enlisted" in some desperate

fight? When I picked up to-day's paper and found there, in the editorial page, a deadly attack, I suffered as if I had been actually knocked down and stamped upon.

WILLARD'S HOTEL, WASHINGTON, March 3, 1886.

Behold my present abode! Ellsworth and Burroughs met me and E. and I settled down here after holding our noses for a while at the Temperance Hotel! I have seen Watterson and Nordhoff, *et al.*, and have called on Mrs. Burroughs. To-morrow's programme is: —

10 A.M. Call on Copyright Lawyer.

11. Take Burroughs and Ellsworth to see the Secretary of State.

12. Go with Watterson to the House.

1. Lunch.

2.30. Call at the Frelinghuysens (by request).

6.30 Dine at the “

8. Go with Miss Lucy (F) and the Adamses to see Irving.

This is rather crowded. But I am going to bed early to-night!

WASHINGTON, March 17, 1888.

The trip was pleasant. Hutton and Boyesen brought along their wives and Hutton some other ladies. Stedman and his boy were along, and Palmer, of the Madison Square, Clemens and Riley. Story-telling and all that.

At the reading¹ this afternoon I seem to have done better than before — am quite covered with congratulations. At least I was heard better than usual and did n't fizzle. A potted azalea was sent up to me — like a prima donna — which covered me with blushes.

After the reading I took by appointment a small party to "tea" at the White House with Mrs. Cleveland and Mrs. Lamont. I introduced Mark Twain, Riley, and the Huttons to the President.

Yesterday and to-day have been almost the busiest I have ever known. I could n't get in a line yesterday and to-day I am almost in despair of getting through what I must do. I am arranging with Hay and Kennan and lobbying now in dead earnest — and *have* to make a lot of calls on account of "benefits received."

You were missed at the White House last night, I assure you. I cannot be thoroughly myself, or thoroughly happy without you. I had lots to do with the authors, and was somewhat bothered about things, but the reception was a success. I will have much to tell you.

To a friend

April 1, 1886.

Is it not strange, this attitude of the old-fashioned politician toward foreign things? The tariff is meant to keep "abroad" away from us: our copyright laws

¹ Authors' reading for the benefit of the International Copyright League.

are meant to get all of "abroad" we can lay hands on without paying. Meantime American literature is suffering daily, and Congress doubts the wisdom of common humanity and duty.

I think that with a man like Senator I—— the very fact that literary men want it might prejudice him against the bill. Am I wrong in suspecting this? If he says to you that ideas cannot be copyrighted, please don't forget to tell him that authors claim, not ideas, but only the form in which they are expressed, just as a telegraph inventor does not claim electricity, but the method in which he uses it.

To C. S. Fairchild

December 23, 1887.

It looks as if the crime of literary piracy might be done away with at the present Congress. At least we are going to try once more, and now with better chances. The Pearsall Smith controversy¹ side-show is our principal stumbling block — that and the immorality of certain sorts of statesmen.

P.S. Since writing the above I have had a delightful visit from Miss Smith and Mr. Smith!

To a friend

December 7, 1887.

You probably saw that the President did not mention anything in his Message except the question of

¹ Mr. Pearsall Smith attempted to introduce a measure which would have seriously curtailed the author's rights in the publication of his own works.

the surplus. He explained to me personally that this was the reason for not alluding to the copyright matter at present. He did not wish it known before the appearance of his Message that he intended to confine the document to one subject, but he explained the matter to me confidentially a couple of days before the Message was read.

To W. C. P. Breckinridge

February 2, 1888.

Although so deeply interested in international copyright as you know, I spoke to no member of Congress while in Washington except Senator Chace, who has the bill which the authors hope to pass, and yourself. I think Congressmen should be informed on the subject by those who have studied the matter, but as a rule I would rather print my views where they can be seen than attempt to run around and buttonhole our lawmakers. I think that when it comes to discussion and a vote the measure will find more supporters than the croakers look for, and the ultimate passage of the bill is as sure as was the destruction of slavery. Nothing obviously immoral can continue to exist in a free country.

If an American publisher steals a foreign book, he knows that he is stealing perfectly well, and if a foreign author's book is stolen, he knows that a theft has been committed. No one can refine away or make anything but immoral a transaction of this kind. The

cut-throat stealing business is itself now about played out, and the leading pirates join with the respectable publishers and with the authors in asking for congressional action.

I send you a copy of the "Publishers' Weekly" in which there is a great deal on the subject. All that I would ask you to read is the "Open Letter to Readers of Books" sent out by Mr. Lowell, President, Mr. Stedman, Vice-President, and the Executive Committee of the American Copyright League; also the copyright report made in 1837 by your great fellow citizen, Henry Clay. That is a wise and true report, and American literature and the literature of the whole Anglo-Saxon race would have been put on a firmer foundation and would, I have no doubt, been richer and better had Henry Clay's suggestions been adopted. This measure has been advocated by Clay, Webster, — in fact, I believe by all the leading statesmen, and by successive Presidents of the United States, including President Cleveland.

The only thing that will militate against it is the fear that books will be made dearer. We hold that that is an irrelevant consideration. If we could steal our wheat from Manitoba, the stolen wheat would be cheaper than the wheat that had been paid for: nevertheless, such are the conditions of the book trade that the demand for cheap literature is sure to be supplied. The law will not be retroactive, and besides, new books will constantly be made at cheap rates in order

to meet the hunger and thirst of the American masses for cheap books. Natural laws will take care of that.

I should consider it a great favor if you would feel free to ask me any question in connection with the matter which may occur to your mind. As I asserted above, I am sure that sooner or later the measure must be adopted and that it will not lack eloquent support in the lower House, but it would, I confess, be a personal satisfaction to me if you yourself took a conspicuous part in the discussion.

So far as I know my enthusiasm for the cause is entirely on account of its moral and patriotic bearings. I believe the framers of the law make no provisions for the magazines, and if England should make the terms reciprocal (that is, require manufacture) the "Century" could not be copyrighted in England where it now enjoys copyright. But two or three of the magazines are thoroughly prosperous and do not need for their encouragement the legitimate protection of a copyright law. It is to me an unendurable national disgrace that America should stand out against all the world as a nation of literary thieves. The responsibility was once that of certain leading American publishers who opposed international copyright. These men are now among its earnest supporters, and publishers, authors, and printers are at present united in supporting the cause.

To Senator Chace

April 26, 1888.

You may readily imagine the intense interest with which we have been watching your businesslike, thorough and dignified presentation of the subject of international copyright. The moment that we found the fight had begun, we ourselves and our friends telegraphed to different parts of the country stirring up various friends of the measure to appeal immediately to their representatives in the Senate. We know also how extremely useful Dr. Eggleston's presence must have been. We think you are going to overcome all opposition and carry the bill triumphantly through the Senate.

We of the "Century" feel especially like thanking you for the generous and handsome way in which you have referred to American magazines and particularly to the one with which we are connected.

To Henry Adams

January 8, 1889.

As to lobbying: we will give you five cents a day for the rest of the winter if you will say five words a day to your boon companions in the lower House in favor of international copyright; but I am afraid your influence will be the other way in your great and avowed desire to have your book stolen.

I am glad you think I like lobbying. The fact is, I think it is absolutely disgraceful that Congressmen


should have to be hunted and chased around in order to get them to do their public duties. I believe I have no personal interest in the copyright matter, and I certainly would not devote so much time to anything personal. There are some things that make me, at times, ashamed of being an American, and the absence of copyright is one. So I suppose my friends and I will go on lobbying year in and year out, till I am worn out, while Congress will keep on renewing itself for the contest and will therefore never get a chance to be thoroughly tired.

The family lobbying that you say has been going on for ninety years surprises me very much, for I supposed that personal bills appealed more to Congress than impersonal ones. Upon consideration I am afraid you won't do as a lobbyist. If you have been ninety years at your own bill you will be at least a century on ours!

To Senator Lodge

May 6, 1890.

My heart is too full for utterance on the copyright question. It is an absolute cruelty that a few of us have to sacrifice so much time and energy in this cause of simple, obvious decency. I hope the thing will be over this winter and we can turn our attention to nobler work than convincing Congressmen that there is such a thing as national honor. I congratulate you heartily on your stand, and on your eloquent



words. It is interesting to see that, after all, the attack on theft and the upholding of private honesty and national honor are the strongest arguments. In fact, the national honor is the one thing, personally, that I care about, and know that is *your* feeling too.

There is only a little more than a baker's dozen of votes that would have to be changed (the same men voting), so perhaps we need not be so discouraged. However, we will fight as long as an author lives and is backed by such men as yourself in the National Congress.

With this firm resolution the campaign of 1890-91 opened. Mr. Johnson was on the scene of action in Washington and my father worked in New York. The bill was on the point of being passed, when an unexpected opposition developed on the part of the engravers. They attempted to tack on an amendment in their own favor, which threatened its very life. There was no time to be lost if the bill was to be voted on at that session. Mr. Johnson telegraphed to my father, who immediately saw the leaders of the counter-movement. He made various propositions and discussed the situation, all to no avail. Finally, as he wrote to Mr. Johnson, "In the midst of the talk I waxed righteously wroth and threatened them with the indignation of the world if they killed this bill — and with the denunciation of the entire moral sense of the community." This had the desired effect. A

compromise was reached in Washington shortly afterward, and on March 4 the bill was passed.

To Edward Eggleston

March 14, 1891.

I feel like shaking hands with you across the water over the copyright triumph. As you may imagine, it was a hard and doubtful fight to the very last moment. The last night it was an all-night fight, but it was won finally, and we all have reason to rejoice! There seems to have been an attempt in England to belittle the victory on account of the printers; but the authors will get over that pretty soon.

Edward Eggleston answered promptly: "Thanks for your letter rejoicing over the passage of the Copyright Bill. It is like a bracing tonic to me to think it done. As you and I began it in 1883, I suppose we may sing the doxology together now that the principle of literary property, regardless of nationality, is written on the statute book never to be effaced. The wood and hay and stubble of the hill shall be burned, but the gold, silver, and precious stones shall remain."

Kindergarten Association

The work required to bring to a successful conclusion the copyright campaign, together with his duties as President of the Fellowcraft Club and Secretary of the Washington Arch Committee, to say nothing of editorial and civic affairs, would certainly seem to

have warranted my father in declining any new responsibilities. It is not surprising, therefore, that when he was asked to take part in a movement to introduce free kindergartens in New York City, he at first refused. "When Mr. Daniel S. Remsen came to me," he said, "and asked me if I would simply sign a paper in favor of kindergartens, I consulted Professor Butler (later President Butler) and signed the paper on condition that I should do nothing else. Thereupon in my absence, I was made President and did duty for three years!"

His interest in the kindergarten was not only an educational interest. He saw in it a means of developing a better civic life, a higher standard of living and of acting among the people of the tenements. "Plant a free kindergarten in any quarter of the overcrowded metropolis," he said, in the words that have been used on all the official kindergarten reports in New York since that time, "and you have begun then and there the work of making better lives, better homes, better citizens, and a better city."


What was actually accomplished by the New York Kindergarten Association under his three years' presidency is fully set forth in the following letters, — but of the endless work involved, the public meetings, the committee meetings, the entertainments organized to raise funds, there is no adequate account. Much of the work connected with the entertainments was done by my father himself, and many of his friends volun-

teered their services, as in the case of Joseph Jefferson, who made his first appearance as a lecturer for the benefit of the New York Kindergarten Association.

"I am glad to be able to say," my father wrote in June, 1891, "that we have been greatly encouraged in New York by the rapidly spreading interest in the work of the association and in the kindergarten idea and kindergarten methods, in general.

"There is a deep philosophy, as you know, in this idea, — but the practical application of this philosophy in a living kindergarten makes the study a very simple, indeed, a very enticing one, and we have found the kindergarten itself the greatest teacher of its own benefits, of the soundness of its own methods. The children who are gathered into our kindergartens, and the mothers of these children, have no scepticism whatever on the subject, but there is nothing so convincing to a searcher for educational truths as a visit or visits to a 'child-garden' presided over by a 'gardener' who thoroughly understands her business.

"Such a searcher may perhaps question, at first, after seeing the practical application of the method, whether anything so evidently delightful can be absolutely scientific, and permanently salutary. There are many older kindergartens than ours in New York, and the searcher for educational truth can find in our own city, in San Francisco, in St. Louis, in Milwaukee, in Philadelphia, and in Boston abundant proofs of the excellent workings of the method.



"So far, then, we have nothing but encouragement. I may tell you, indeed, that our association has recently, by request of the authorities, presented a plan or plans for the experimental introduction of the kindergarten into the public school system of New York. There is already a kindergarten in our Normal College, but it is proposed to start five or six in connection with various public schools of the city."

To a friend

October 5, 1892.


One great object of the association has already been accomplished, — namely, the adoption of the system by the public schools of New York. The Board of Education expects to start twenty kindergartens sometime this winter. There seems to be a strong feeling in the society, however, that there will be a great deal of work for voluntary kindergartens outside of the Board of Education, as they cannot take children under the age of five, and we take them younger; besides, our kindergartens are different from the public school kindergartens, because of the greater care taken of the children by ours. For instance, our teachers visit the homes and there is a close and salutary connection between the schools and the families.

Outside the annual dues we expect to raise not less than \$3500 for our work this year. In addition to that the society hopes that a considerable sum will be raised so that all the schools for next year will be provided for this year.

To summarize the work accomplished by the association I quote this letter to Mr. William H. Tolman, dated January 5, 1894.

"The New York Kindergarten Association was started (at the suggestion of Mr. Daniel S. Remsen) at a conference held on the 14th of May, 1889, in response to a call signed by David G. Wylie, Leighton Williams, Richard Watson Gilder, E. Winchester Donald, Angeline Brooks, and Daniel S. Remsen. The association opened its first kindergarten in March, 1890, and now — in January, 1894 — has charge of fourteen kindergartens, supported by various associations and private individuals and by the general funds of the society, obtained by annual dues, life memberships, special donations, and the proceeds of entertainments. The association also has been an important factor in the adoption of the kindergarten system by the Board of Education of the City of New York, and at its recent annual meeting, the President of the Board stated that 'the Board now maintains successfully kindergartens in seven of the schools under its jurisdiction,' and expects to add eight more in the course of the next spring, making fifteen in all during the present school year."

My father resigned from the presidency of the association in 1894, but continued in active membership, serving first on the Committee of Ways and



Means and later in other capacities. The kindergarten system, adopted by the Board of Education, has grown with the growth of the whole public school organization. There are now (1916) over nine hundred kindergartens in New York.

"Two Worlds"

The summer of 1891 was the last spent at Marion. It began none too auspiciously with an illness of my father. "Nights without sleep," he describes it, "with rheumatic accompaniments"!

"My last winter in New York," he wrote ruefully in July of that year, "I am forced to confess, was a bit too altruistic. Outside of my heavy literary duties — it was international copyright, kindergarten, reform politics, Young Women's Christian Association readings, a brace of Lincoln lectures, the Washington Memorial Arch, and, as a consequence, a fearful attack of sciatica — which has left me weak and only half myself. I have promised H. and my doctors to reform and be selfish in my old age!"

"MARION, July 17, '91.

"I find I am scudding under bare poles this summer. Have had no vacation! but am just off for a week or ten days now. I have had as many as fifty or sixty letters in a single day here to answer or annotate, with my own hand."

He spent most of the summer in Marion in this

fashion, reading manuscript and carrying on his business affairs at long distance. In July his fifth book of verse appeared. Writing to my mother several months before, he said: —

“I am working on my book. I have arranged the poems in their proper order, and written the one which would give the title and come first, if you like it: *Two Worlds* — how would that do? It means the old happy pagan world and the Christian world. The poem is of only two stanzas, the first about the Venus of Milo, the second about Michael Angelo’s slave. These two thoughts, the ancient joyous pagan world and the new typified by the suffering smile of the slave, are the *two* keynotes of the book interblending in the Ode, at the end.

“The book is in five parts without titles.

“1st, the Poems of Two Worlds. (Do you prefer *Two Statues*?)

“1. Poems of Affection and Friendship, etc., opening with ‘The Star in the City.’

“2. Poems of Art.

“3. Patriotism, etc.

“4. The Soul.

“5. The Ode.”

“My new book,” he wrote in July, “was finished with the birth of the new child one happy dawn.”

The poems in this book were all written during these four years of particularly active public service, that is between 1887 and 1891, when his multifarious

duties might well have smothered the poetic fire. They seem only to have had the effect of adding new fuel to the flame, of stirring those depths of emotion and feeling which produce the truest and the purest art. The volume is not thick, but it is packed tight with vital experiences and long-considered thoughts. The effect of this crowding in upon him of outside demands was that my father poured into one song or sonnet what he might, under more leisurely conditions, have expanded into many pages of verse. He would never in any circumstance have neglected that revision, polishing, and completion which he considered a necessary part of any artistic production and to which he always subjected his own work. If he had had more time he might have written more in quantity, but he certainly could not have written with more sincerity, or, when the creative moment had passed, with more solicitude for artistic perfection.

His poetry is not less general because it is inspired by personal and often definitely traceable experiences. All poetry that has any vitality is personal, and the more personal and deeply felt it is, the more it merges into the expression of a feeling shared by all mankind. The deaths of Sherman and Sheridan and of the "faithful chaplain" are immediate personal experiences of my father, but in every age and land there are such heroes, and such dirges to be sung. In his "Credo" and in "Non sine dolore" he expresses a doubt, a faith, and a hope that are immemorial, and

that are also his personal beliefs and aspirations. The "Ode," read before the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Harvard in June, 1890, is a more general, a more classical expression of the passion of the soul for "beauty and holiness."

The volume in which these poems appeared was encased in a white vellum binding, lettered in gold with a decorative cross on the front and a wild rose on the back. The pages of the book were embellished with H. de K. G.'s drawings, as were all these first editions of my father's songs. There was also a cloth edition for more general distribution. Writing to Aldrich in October, 1891, my father says: —


"I fear a cloth copy of my book went to you by mistake. Please shy it out of the window without hurting any entirely innocent passer-by, if there should be such a person in the street, and accept the vellum copy sent to-day.

"I have n't got over, and won't, the pride I feel in that delightful thing of Woodberry's on my book. Your subtly appreciative words go along with his to make me much more cheerful than for years over my insufficient but irrepressible verse."



CHAPTER VII
CIVIL SERVICE REFORM
1891-1894

WITH their installation in their new house on Clinton Place, my father and mother resumed their "Friday Evenings" at home. Here, as formerly in the Studio on Fifteenth Street, artists and actors, musicians and writers mingled with a varied collection of philanthropists, millionaires, and penniless philosophers. Occasionally the guest of the evening was some "visiting potentate"; or again a young musician found here his first audience; but whether there was any special attraction or not, these informal receptions were always entertaining, for they brought together the most divergent and unexpected types. Casual geniuses, relying on my father's reputation for never sleeping, would stroll in for a social cup of tea at any hour of the night. "Some one should write a history of your mother's 'salon,'" a friend admonished me; but what history, what list of names, or record of receptions and concerts could reconstruct the atmosphere of these gatherings. Friendly and informal, yet full of variety and interest, they were the natural expression of my father's and mother's personality. My father was particularly gregarious in his instincts. He



loved people, he was unaffectedly and boyishly enthusiastic and impulsively hospitable; he had, indeed, a gift for friendships, to which his whole life witnesses. These friends came often to his home, delighting in his spontaneity, his bubbling good spirits, and sure of an underlying depth of affection and loyalty ready for any demand.

My mother was a scarcely less active centre of interests and enterprises than my father. She accomplished an astonishing number of things with an apparent ease and calmness surprising in this age of excitability and "nerves." Beside five growing children her household usually included at least one visiting guest or relative. During these busy years, she belonged to several clubs, the Fortnightly, the Music Club, and others; she organized and helped in the management of various social and philanthropic schemes; she read widely in French, German, and English, and all the while comforted, encouraged, and kept alive that firebrand of energy and emotion, my father, who, without her support, could never have survived the struggle on this "metropolitan battlefield."

Descriptive of the more intimate and social side of New York are the following extracts from my mother's letters to Mrs. Foote, who was then living in the West. This correspondence covers many years and gives a vivid impression of the setting of my father's daily life. The first letter is, however, in his own hand, written when he first met Paderewski:—



THE DRAWING-ROOM AT NO. 55 CLINTON PLACE



To H. G.

November 21, 1891.

Paderewski! Well, you have a treat in store! He is quite by himself — reminding me of no one but the young Swinburne! His genius is altogether individual, and if the individuality appeals, fascinating. It appealed to me immensely. He is not sublime, but most intensely poetic; his touch is delicacy itself in the tender parts — fairy-like; almost sharp, certainly charmingly crisp and at times powerful; there is a quiet alertness, like some queer new animal sure of his prey. He played the enclosed programme, and was constantly playing encores, very generously, though I learn to-day from the "Times" that he was not well. The "hit" of his playing was that minuet of his that Aus der Ohe plays. He played it very differently — in a way to excite you more, with his quick, strange touch and tempo, though she plays it exquisitely.

H. G. to Mary Hallock Foote

December, 1891.

I went to a lunch to Paderewski which was a very fine affair. Mme. Modjeska was as charming as ever, but looked worn. She talked a great deal about her grandchild. Stanford White was there and Richard came in late, after going to Seventy-fifth Street for the violin of a young musical protégé of ours. He is so kind and takes so much pains about all this.

Woodberry and the Janviers dined with us. Woodberry is an interesting man, dreadfully homesick for Massachusetts! There is something winning and sweet about him.

January 21, 1892.

Paderewski is one of the most extraordinary experiences in our lives! He is not at all like Rubenstein, who is like an ocean, and one of the greatest of the great, but in his way as intense an individuality. He is a little like Modjeska, so noble, persuasive, delicate, firm; and the most artistic creature imaginable, all nerves and sinew, but the body subordinate to the spirit — always. A wonderful intelligence which some artists, actors and especially musicians (above all virtuosi) lack. I have dined with him twice, and the second time sat next to him so that I had quite a chance to know him. Richard has written him a beautiful poem. He dines here next Monday.

March 1, 1892.

Kipling dined with us on Saturday, and I found him very simple in outward ways, interested in everything about him, and no hint of the "big head" which we had been told so much about. His talk was general and perfectly unaffected. Of course we made him talk about himself — that is part of the art of conversing with a genius. He told us some very amusing things about elephants, and I asked him (apropos of Francesca to whom he talked Hindoo — and I said he

mesmerized her!) how much he believed of those things. He said he did not know, but the first time he saw the beef killed in Chicago he was more overcome than at the sight of human beings killed: it was the "sacred cow," and to kill it was sacrilege. Of course in a sense he is not simple at all — he is tremendously complicated. Mrs. Kipling is a real New England girl, interested in interesting things and a woman of much good sense but not prosaic.

April 12, 1892.

Not the least interesting thing I have done this week was a visit to Saint-Gaudens. I went to see him about the Paderewski memorial. The Sherman was there in a small model — unfinished. It is most impressive. Then I saw, for the first time well and in a good light, the Nirvana head for Mrs. Adams's monument — ah, to make a work of art like that would be worth a sacrifice! It is so deep and so tender. The Shaw was all covered up, but I believe is getting on. The last time I saw it it was stunning.

On Monday, the 21st, one of the most amusing things which ever happened — a Japanese tea at Mr. La Farge's; Mr. and Mrs. Kipling, Mrs. La Farge's sister, Bancel La Farge, Richard, and I. We looked at the Japanese and Samoan sketches, with a running comment by La Farge. Kipling was extremely interested and of course interesting. He is not artistic in our sense of the word; very British, and consequently

not sensitive to form and color, but very much interested in the human side of the matter. They are on their way to Japan and thence to Samoa — I mean the Kiplings. La Farge has been there over a year and has seen a great deal.

We gave the Kiplings a compass. The case is a lizard skin lined with a piece of Jap silk with the Great Dragon on it — and the soul symbol.

January, 1893.

Paderewski has returned to his own — who adore him! We went to a big dinner at the Dunhams' in his honor and after dinner had some little speeches — very light and pretty. R. made a speech ending with some verses. Paderewski was delighted. He came to see us as soon as he arrived and was romping with Francesca when I came downstairs.

R. spends his evenings trying to convince Woodberry that Bryant was a poet. W. is here almost every Sunday evening. Last Friday evening, after every one had gone home, R. and I had Mme. Duse till two in the morning! — until she got so sleepy she had to go home.

November, 1893.

The Booth Memorial was very interesting and touching. Woodberry's poem was fine, but perhaps too scholarly for the public. Salvini was the "star" and his short address in his beautiful language was a model of grace, tact, and distinction. It could not

have been better. The music, the overture to Hamlet by Tschaikowsky, was very beautiful. R. was acting Chairman of the Committee on Speakers and got Salvini and Irving to speak.

The People's Municipal League

During this time my father was becoming more and more absorbed in municipal and national politics, beginning, in 1890, with a struggle for better city government in New York. The organization by which this movement was carried on was the People's Municipal League which supported Mr. (now Justice) Francis M. Scott for Mayor against the Tammany nominee, Hugh Grant. Writing to his brother in July my father explains his position with regard to an official position in the League, at first called the Citizens' Committee.

To J. B. Gilder

MARION, MASS., July 16, 1890.

As for me, I am doing and shall do all in my power for the movement, so far as I can, conscientiously, both as to my own other duties and as to its action. I have been in communication with no one as to the inside workings, and would be unable in the fall to devote myself to it as I should if officially in any way responsible for the committee's action. I never can, as has been suggested, let my name and that of the "Century" go where my work does not go, in a matter

like this. As a citizen and as an editor I shall continue to fight against the city's rings. In order that I can do this more intelligently I wish someone connected with the movement would tell me something about it.

July 29, 1890.

I hope you will go on the Committee, or do whatever it is that Welling wants. I have written to him that I heartily approve of the programme as he lays it down, and will both privately and publicly work for the cause — up to the limit of my disposable time and strength.

On his return to New York in the fall, my father did join the People's Municipal League officially, serving first on the large general committee and then as one of the vice-presidents. The story of the campaign and its unfortunate failure is touched upon in the following letters: —

To a friend

November 7, 1890.

I am trying to grasp psychologically the processes of a Tammany "shrieker," who thinks it is impertinent, and outrageous, and intensely humorous for a decent man to vote and work for an able and proper candidate for Mayor, while he finds nothing humorous in the interest taken by a discharged convict in voting for and working for a Tammany politician. A Tammany man is a Chinaman in ethics. Everything

is reversed with him, — the good is bad and the bad is good, and whatever is honorable is ridiculous.

To A. C. Bernheim

November 3, 1890.

Whichever way the election of to-morrow goes, there is a lifetime of work before the patriotic citizens of New York in the education of all classes in the community in their duties of citizenship. The well-to-do classes can be reached by the ordinary means, especially through established newspapers, by essays, lectures, sermons, etc., although I think even these classes are greatly in need of missionary work in this direction. But it is a great question how to reach the poorer part of the community, — the tenement house districts.


An editorial by an outside writer will soon be published in the "Century," which will favor lectures, etc., on matters connected with government among these people, but I have for months cherished a scheme which I have not yet put on paper. Some weeks ago I spoke to Mr. William E. Dodge about it, and last night I mentioned it to Mr. Chapman and Mr. Sedgwick. I do not know whether the Toynbee movement in England includes a newspaper, but whether it does or not, I do not see why such a scheme would not be practicable in New York. With proper capital, a group of young men could go down to the east side and start a newspaper that would speak to

the poor people, — one which would take every occasion to present matters of public, and especially of municipal interest in an educational way. It might be called "The Citizen," and it might be a daily teacher in good citizenship. It should be interesting, strongly local, good-natured, and amusing. I think that such an enterprise might soon pay for itself, — an honest and educative penny paper for the people. Part of its corps should be permanent and part should be occasional; that is, certain young fellows could volunteer for a month, or for six months, or for a year at a time.

To a friend

November 6, 1890.

I am very much pleased at the moral vote of Pennsylvania, but terribly cut up at the set-back that we have had in New York. We were all fighting Tammany with an enthusiasm I have seldom, if ever, seen, but have been beaten out of our boots, although Tammany's vote is increased but little. The trouble was we could not get the people to realize the situation. I myself was in the midst of the fight, making speeches at the Convention and at Chickering Hall, and actually from a truck in streets. H. and another lady started the woman's movement about which you have seen. It means a lifelong work trying to educate people in the right direction. There seems to be a feeling that an honest man is an impertinent intruder if he expresses any dissent from the management of poli-



tics by murderers, liquor dealers, and selfish and vulgar politicians generally.

My father's interest in the City Club of New York might be considered part of this lifelong work for the attainment of a higher standard of civic life. He was a member of the board of managers of the club, and was for years chairman of the library committee. He was later vice-president, and for a while acting president of the club — and was always an energetic and enthusiastic member. As chairman of its special committee on the preservation of the City Hall (this was in March, 1894), he did his share in arousing a strong opposition to the destruction of one of the few handsome, historical buildings in the city. He urged other clubs to pass resolutions and make petitions to the Mayor; he published in the "Century" a descriptive article about the building, which was later reprinted in pamphlet form and used as a "campaign document." By dint of heroic efforts the vandalism was prevented and the City Hall was saved.


Another effort of the same nature, involving the directing of public opinion, the writing of innumerable letters, the passing of resolutions and the drawing up of memorials and petitions, was the agitation, in 1891, in favor of opening the Metropolitan Museum on Sunday. The only way to convince the museum authorities that the people who had no day free but Sunday would really appreciate and enjoy the Mu-

seum, was to illustrate it in practice. Those interested in the movement raised enough money to try the experiment for one summer. It was so successful that the Museum has ever since been open Sunday.

Third Cleveland Campaign

More engrossing even than these municipal interests were the national issues of this period. During the four years' interregnum between Mr. Cleveland's two administrations, my father had seen him a great deal, and was, of course, keenly interested in his nomination and second election. He wrote for the presidential campaign of 1892, "A Literary Man's Estimate of Grover Cleveland." It appeared in Mr. George F. Parker's short "Life of Cleveland," which he published and circulated as a campaign pamphlet. In this essay, as in the following letters, my father gives expression to the very high opinion he entertained of Mr. Cleveland. The first one, to Edward Eggleston, is dated August, 1888: —

"If ever a man made a hard and ceaseless and successful battle for pure and honest government that man is President Cleveland. History will write his name in large letters; it will recognize not only the purity of his purpose, but his immense actual accomplishment; it will place its seal upon the nobility of his aims and the enormous force of his personality. Lowell, who was right about Lincoln, is right about Cleveland. The President is not perfect, nor without



error,— in other words he is a human being,— but he is the towering individuality of our day, and when he is gone the whole people will be as just to him as the whole people are now just to Abraham Lincoln.”

By December, 1889, when the next letter was written, the Clevelands were installed in New York. Writing to Mr. Bryce, my father said: —

“If you watch the papers you will see that Mr. Cleveland, the youngest, I believe, of our ex-Presidents, holds an entirely unique place in the people’s regard. His tremendous effect upon the Democratic party still continues. With citizens of all parties he stands to-day higher than ever; especially as his successor is a slave of the spoils system, while he (Mr. Cleveland) bravely leads public sentiment by his speeches in favor of tariff reform, civil service reform and ballot reform.”

To J. R. Lowell

December 24, 1889.

Mrs. Gilder and I were up at the Clevelands’ the other night and I have never seen Cleveland so delighted with anything as he is with your poem.¹ I have never seen him so enthusiastic. He said he would n’t exchange it for anything that had ever been given him. That it put the case in language which seemed to him exact; in other words, he thought it admirable because it agreed with his own opinions

¹ The lines beginning “Let who has felt compute the strain.”

(this, laughing!). You know he feels that some of the Civil Service reformers misjudged him.

To Johnson Brigham

November 20, 1890.

You must excuse me from writing politics for publication. I am very glad to write to you in confidence, however, on the situation as I understand it.

Since Cleveland came to New York, every friend of his has felt that he should be kept out of local dissension in his own party, and he had friends on both sides in the late municipal fight.

The overwhelming fact that Cleveland's principles are endorsed all over the country by the elections, makes the incident of Hill's having control of the New York "machine" only a slight one. The feeling for Cleveland is so strong throughout the country, that if New York refused to nominate him, he would be nominated at the convention almost by acclamation, outside of New York. New York would then join in and take care to be on the winning side.

The curious thing about the situation is, that Cleveland has not lifted his little finger to secure the nomination, and I think there are circumstances under which he might refuse to take it. The fact that he has a great future behind him, even if he should not have one before him, gives him extraordinary independence and influence. While Hill is running all over the country and pulling wires wherever he goes, Cleve-

land is doing nothing except in a most natural and frank way. He is not making bargains and deals with anybody, and if he is renominated it will be on what they call a "tidal wave of popularity," rather than as the result of any machinations of his own. I think Hill is shrewd enough to stand from under.

A prominent Cleveland Democrat told me the other day that he thought Cleveland, politically, was a "lonely man." This is one of the things I admire about him. The country, state, and city are full of his admirers and friends, but he has no use for henchmen and wire-pullers about him. An ordinary politician would have been annoyed at the conduct of men like Mr. Fairchild and some others (including myself) who are supposed to be close to him, but who went into the local fight with their sleeves rolled up regardless of the consequences to any one.

I knew exactly what "The Sun" would say, and of course it has been harping away upon our names and trying to injure Cleveland, through Tammany, by this means. But there is a sentiment in the community, and in the country at large which is above all such views, and it is in the strength of this sentiment that Cleveland himself is strong.


April 11, 1892.

The rush of events has been most extraordinary, illuminating and encouraging as to the masses of the people. The Democratic Mugwump movement seems

to affect greater numbers of the party, and more stalwart Democrats than did the Republican Mugwump movement of '84. It is astonishing to hear so many life-long Democrats say that they will vote for Harrison rather than for Hill, — but of course Hill is now a "back number." The first feeling was, that he should not take Cleveland's place; the next wave of indignation was embodied in the thought that he of all men should not prevent Cleveland from having his natural position.

It is a great gratification to me that the country — that is thoughtful and fair-minded men in all parties — estimated Mr. Cleveland generously and truly, at least since he has left office. I think now you will hardly believe that I exaggerated my admiration for his character, courage and disinterestedness. He threw away the Presidency from a sense of duty before his first nomination, during his first term of office, and has done it since. Such a record is well-nigh unexampled. The beauty of it is, he is capable of doing that sort of thing three times a day.

In June, 1892, my father went to Chicago to attend the Democratic National Convention, and played an unexpected part in preventing the nomination of a certain undesirable candidate for the Vice-Presidency. Some of the amusing and exciting incidents of his stay in Chicago are described in the following letter to Mr. Cleveland: —



To Grover Cleveland

CHICAGO, ILL., June 24, 1892.

My presence here was somewhat of an accident, but you can imagine what an interested spectator I have been of the Convention as it appeared to the public in the Wigwam, as well as behind the curtain. I wish in the first place to explain my telegrams. I had no idea of communicating with you, especially in so delicate a matter as the Vice-Presidency, although I was disgusted at the prospect of seeing placed at your side a reputation, which, though it has not hindered local advancement in one State, would, when industriously spread out all over the United States, make a most unpleasant element in the national canvass. The man proposed was so vulnerable that there are a great many of your best friends who thought his name would, on the whole, do more harm than good; and when I found that men like Dickinson and John E. Russell were determined to prevent it if possible, I did not feel that I was so out in my prejudices. However, I talked to but few, — such men as Bayard, Stetson, Fairchild, Strauss, — who are close to you, and then left the matter alone, feeling that it was dangerous ground for one not a politician to have anything to do with at such a critical juncture. Meeting Mr. Dickinson, he pulled from his pocket a telegram he had just written, and said that rather than send it himself, he would be greatly obliged if I embodied it in a telegram.

I know how delighted you must have been with Mr.

Wilson's speech; — even the Republicans acknowledge its brilliancy and effectiveness. As a presiding officer he was entirely too amiable to handle a Convention Hall with the largest crowd in it ever gathered on such an occasion. The 20,000 or so outside delegates, and the extraordinary series of thunderstorms were too much for him.

Everybody praised Mr. Whitney's generalship. You can imagine how cool and collected he was through the whole performance. Mr. Dickinson on the floor acted with great sagacity. There was a moment during the roll-call on the vote, when New Mexico was reached, when the strain was intense. A few of the outlying provinces at the end of the roll-call were of a kind — not to put too fine a point upon it — that might have been perhaps bought up within the space of three seconds; they were supposed to be pretty quick sellers. The Tammany man made a rush upon them, but Mr. Dickinson was there as quickly, and while Tammany was imploring, Mr. Dickinson was cracking his whip, and it came out all right.

The first day I was in the gallery, but there was nothing of much consequence. The last two days I was on the platform, and if I did anything useful in the fight, it was, perhaps, in supplying physical nutriment to both Mr. Whitney and Mr. Wilson. I went out about half-past one and got into an impromptu restaurant, and found Mr. Roosevelt on one side of

me and Mr. Flower on the other. Neither of them could get anything to eat, and as my pockets were filled I was able to feed the tiger. I said to Mr. Flower, "I hope you don't mind taking food from a good Cleveland man, who voted for you?" He said he was only too glad to do so, and took my sandwich with statesman-like alacrity, then said in a confidential tone that "we would all be friends and in the same ship after the nomination."

You can imagine the happiness of your special friends: Mr. Whitney, Mr. Parker, Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild, Mr. Dickinson, Mr. Strauss, and others who were on the spot. There was a great deal of embracing of the good old Methodist camp-meeting kind.

One thing that has gratified me exceedingly, is the bringing out in the fight of many splendid men, who have been inspired by your leadership. Every one whose heart is in the right place is happy in this tremendous triumph of principles over policy, or rather over spoils in American politics. It is a great day for our country. Personal congratulations to you seem almost out of place, because I know how reluctantly and in what a solemn spirit you take up this new conflict.

A Western acquaintance of my father, a politician who had been present at the convention, describes the incident of the vice-presidential nomination in the following letter to my father:—

"December, 1892.

"Somewhere in the vicinity of the Richelieu Hotel in Chicago at about noon, on June 19, I met a gentleman about your size and who looked like you in every respect. This gentleman inquired what I knew about the ticket, taking it for granted that Cleveland would be nominated in the first place, who was to be the candidate for Vice-President? 'Oh,' I replied, 'that is all settled, it is to be ——' This gentleman then replied, 'That will be very unsatisfactory. It will kill the ticket.' I was frightened, knowing how firmly the matter was fixed. I replied, 'Let us do something, then, to prevent it.' His answer was, 'Oh, I am only a Mugwump, I have no possible influence in staying it.'"

The writer of the letter instantly proceeded to interview the leaders of the Cleveland party, telling them what "the gentleman" had said, with the result that the nomination was changed. He closes his letter with the remark: "Whether you believe it, or any one else would believe the story, I believe that this friend of mine whom I met accidentally as above stated was the means of defeating ——, and that what he said made the nomination of Stevenson practicable, possible, and certain — and success followed."

Answering this letter my father said: —

"I fear you lay too much stress upon my part in this affair, although I seem to have stirred up things more than I was aware of at the time. Although a Demo-

crat in principle to-day, and, as you know, a most convinced upholder of Mr. Cleveland, I do not claim to be a political adviser. If I do state freely to him, as to all men, my opinions, it is as a 'fool friend' of the President. (I take that fine and expressive phrase from General Collins's speech before the Convention.) I am 'imprudent,' individual, and irresponsible, except to my own conscience. It is a curious thing, by the way, that those sometimes classed as Mr. Cleveland's wisest friends are those who have opposed him in almost all the heroic and celebrated actions of his political life, the very acts which have been, and are, sustained by his 'fool friends.'"

Cleveland's Election and Second Term

To James Bryce

September 27, 1892.

You must know how sincere are my congratulations on your accession to the responsibilities and honors of your present position in Gladstone's Cabinet,—a very strong Cabinet, evidently, and one in which it must be a special honor to serve.

Mr. Cleveland's renomination is one of the greatest triumphs of right feeling and of better things that has ever taken place in American politics. I was out there and saw it from the outside and from the inside.

In November, Cleveland was elected to the Presidency for the second time. On the eve of election day,

as well as on the day itself, my father was with him, as he describes in his "Record of Friendship." Just before Cleveland's inauguration, Mr. E. C. Benedict, Mr. John Sinclair, and my father presented to him a gold watch in honor of that memorable occasion and in token of their affection and loyalty. This watch, which the President wore for the rest of his life, he bequeathed in his will to my father, who in turn left it to Mr. Cleveland's oldest son, Richard. Writing to my father, just before the inauguration, for the double purpose of thanking him for the watch and inviting him to join the Presidential party, Mr. Cleveland said: —

LAKESWOOD, N.J., February 27, 1893.

MY DEAR MR. GILDER: —

I expected to see you this evening and did not suspect any such conspiracy as was developed when the beautiful gift sent to me by yourself and your "pals" reached my hands. I don't know what to say to "you fellows" — and no wonder — for I never had so fine a present before.

I can only say that I am perfectly delighted and that this reminder of such friendliness comes to me at a time when my surroundings do not indicate that all friendship is sincere and disinterested. I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

I wanted to tell you that we expect you and Mrs. Gilder to go with us to Washington next Thursday. A train of those special cars will start from Jersey

City (Liberty Street Ferry) about ten o'clock A.M. You should take the boat that leaves the New York side at 9.45. The train will come here and pick us up and from here will go to Washington by way of Elizabethport, etc. Your baggage must be ready and in the hall perhaps three feet and ten inches inside the door of your house at seven o'clock in the morning — certainly not later than seven o'clock and seven minutes (past) — A.M. — and a wagon will call for it. It will be well to put upon the trunk a card or tag inscribed in legible characters with the name of the owner and his destination in Washington. We shall arrive there between six and half past six P.M.

You will probably hear from Colonel Lamont on this subject as well as other details of the expedition. Please let me know if we may expect you.

My father and mother went to the inauguration and were in Washington many times during the following four years.

To James Bryce

January 13, 1893.


I suppose you have been watching the development of affairs in this country with constant interest, since the election. You probably have heard by this time how independently Cleveland carried himself during the election, refusing both written and oral pledges to Tammany. At a dinner, at which the

Committeemen, including some Tammany men, were present, when they asked him for pledges, it turns out now that he "thundered and lightnined" at them. I can tell you, confidentially, from what I learned from a member of the Committee, that when the subject of pledges was first brought up to him, he virtually offered his resignation. He said he would be very glad to give up his place to any candidate who *would* give pledges, if that sort of thing were necessary.

Since his election, his independence of Tammany, and of all machines, has been shown most unmistakably.

To show the kind of stuff he is made of (I have seen a good deal of him lately in entire privacy, — in fact, for the last four or five years, perhaps no one has seen more of him in this way) we were together alone, for a while the very night before his election, when I did not hesitate to tell him that rather than believe the story true that he had surrendered to Tammany, I would prefer, not only to see him defeated, but dead. "So would I" was his quick and hearty response.

I was present at the Manhattan Club when he made his now famous speech (since the election) against the spoils system, — with Croker, the boss of Tammany, sitting immediately opposite him. I noticed that he spoke with Croker very kindly and pleasantly, but when it came to the speech, I never saw such fire in his eye, and such fury in his voice, as when he attacked the whole idea of the spoils system as opposed



to a government of politics and principles. As some one said to me that night, "He gave it to them in the neck." Walking home after this speech, he was still full of the same thought, and he said that he did not believe he could be mistaken that the conditions now were different from what they had ever been before. He feels that he is the elect of the people, and not of the bosses or the machines, and he means to be the President of the people.

No one since Lincoln has had so difficult a task, and even Lincoln's, in a certain way, was simpler. He is to change the fiscal policy of the people, cutting down the rates of taxation, in the face of a Treasury now nearly empty compared with its condition when he left, four years ago. He must keep off the tide of silver legislation, which is increased by a pressure of distress in certain parts of the West, and, at the same time, he must keep off as much as is practicable, at least, the multitudinous spoilsmen. He must carry out great policies — and many little ones too — in the face of a Congress, which, personally, is probably not very friendly to himself, simply because he is not a "machine" man. At the time of his nomination there were hardly fifteen men in both houses of Congress put together who were sincerely Cleveland men. It is a great comfort that a man of his character, keeping away from all entangling alliances with bosses and machines, should be able to carry the whole people, over the heads of professional politicians. But now he

must unfortunately deal with professional politicians in Congress and elsewhere, in order to carry out the administrative reforms which the country demands; hence the peculiar difficulty of the situation.

December 6, 1893.

I cannot thank you too much for your full and most interesting letter. Mr. Cleveland has been carrying a tremendous load, consisting of difficulties tided over from the last administration with regard to the currency; the necessity of cutting down the extreme McKinley tariff in the midst of financial depression; and on the other hand, the dissatisfaction on the part of many of his best friends and supporters because he has thought it his duty to think first of the currency and tariff questions, rather than the old and ever pressing civil service reform question. One unfortunate appointment on his part (which has now resulted in the resignation of the appointee) has done more to weaken his personal influence than anything in his career. I myself know so well his discouragements and his honest intentions that I still have a great deal more faith in him than most of my reforming friends; and even those who most criticize him put it to bad advice rather than to bad intentions. He has just made an excellent appointment of a Civil Service Commissioner, removing one of his own party who was an obstacle to the cause, so that Roosevelt and his two companions on the Commission are now a united and vigorous body.

One phase of my father's friendship with Cleveland, which, though often annoying, was sometimes very humorous, was the fact that he was considered an excellent means of reaching the President. "I have been applied to," he used to say, "to assist in securing every sort of office under the United States Government, from Secretary of State to rat-catcher at the White House!" His mail was laden with requests and appeals; his editorial rooms were infested with office-seekers, who all received the same answer, whether they were friends or strangers. Not only was it against every instinct of friendship to make use of the President's intimacy and hospitality in order to forward his own or any one's else interest, but also against his principles as an advocate of the merit system. Nevertheless, the applications came in endlessly, not only to my father but to my mother as well. "You would laugh," she wrote to a friend, "if you could see the letters we get asking us to use our influence with Mr. Cleveland! — a man whom I met only this fall wrote to me asking me to recommend — to the President as Secretary of the Treasury!!"

"This beats all!" my father exclaimed, writing to Colonel Lamont, Secretary of War, in March, 1893. "A telegram from an ex-lieutenant of the army wishing me to promote a man to Brigadier-General. This is beyond my power, and if I understand the situation it comes under your own personal control. I never intend to promote an army officer without your

consent and approval; neither shall I appoint any foreign ministers against the protest of Mr. Cleveland and Mr. Gresham. As an American citizen I do not employ those gentlemen for nothing. They must do their own work.

"By the way, do you suppose I could get the President, or any member of the Cabinet, to read some manuscripts for me, or to come here and help edit the magazine and give me an opportunity for a little rest after my wrestlings with the people who want to be ministers, consuls, postmasters, general advisers, etc.?"

"Perhaps the dearest friend I have in the world came to me the other day and said that family circumstances made it desirable for him to take a foreign consulship. It broke me up pretty badly to have to tell him that I could not write a single letter of request or recommendation for new appointments, and was only in the position of being asked, in case any information I possessed might be of use with the 'powers that be.'"

The World's Fair

In the mean while an event of such national importance as the World's Fair at Chicago could not fail to enlist my father's keenest interest. His official connection with it consisted in his membership of two committees of imposing name but comparatively small importance, but his most useful work was to in-

terest the artists and architects of New York in the enterprise and to arouse their enthusiasm. He did a little work in behalf of Sunday opening, and corresponded with one of the directors on a variety of subjects connected with the Fair. At the official opening he was one of McKim's party, and went again later with my mother and brother.

To Edmund Gosse

May, 1893.

It gives me a sort of pang to think you cannot see the World's Fair. The scene at night, in the Court of Honor, has really been something not of this world. The refinement and beauty of the whole thing must be unbelievable to those who think only of Chicago as a city of booms. Chicago deserves all honor for the management that brought about so exquisite a housing of the Fair, but it was the new art movement, which is not of Chicago, nor of New York, but of the modern world, that made it what it is.

Shall I confess that immediately on my return I wrote a piece of verse about it — a sort of rhapsody — which expresses at least my own enthusiasm about the buildings, especially as seen at night. It is some seventy lines in length, and I hope the fact that it was quickly written will not disqualify it from being read, quickly or otherwise. It will be printed in the October "Century." I suppose our London friends will think

I have got a little off my base to praise anything American so vehemently.

This "rhapsody," called "The Vanishing City," received widespread attention and appreciation. Aldrich thought it one of my father's finest poems, and Dr. van Dyke wrote some verses in its praise. In acknowledging this poem my father writes:—

November 2, 1893.

I am most delighted with your charming verses. I should like to print them in large letters on the first page of the magazine, but I am afraid that my reputation for modesty, such as it is, would vanish (with the city).

I cannot think the poem is going to last as long as the impression it has evidently made might warrant the hope of. I know that one does not have to hear the nightingale to love Keats's Ode, but it is different with the World's Fair. A bird is a bird, but a World's Fair is a different thing each time. But never mind, I have your poem, and some other souvenirs of my poem, which will never vanish from my heart while it continues to beat.

This was one of the very few of his own poems with which my father was almost satisfied. "I did not at first realize that I was writing sonnets!" he notes on the margin of a copy of this verse. "I thought I

was inventing simply a long stanza form! Strike me dead, but I would n't so much mind showing this to Keats!"

Letters from the Executive Mansion

To G. E. Woodberry

February, 1894.

It's an age since I've seen you — meantime I've been backwards and forwards between New York and Philadelphia and New York and Washington — being ill, attending conventions, making speeches and Time only knows what not.

At this writing I am staying with Mrs. Gilder at the White House, where I have been [for the past week] except for a day when I spoke in New York at the Board of Trade. We dined with the Supreme Court last Thursday — but I had to skip the Army and Navy Reception on Saturday night for the Board of Trade. This room is Lincoln's bedroom and the one where Garfield lay ill (our old room here). Immediately across the hall is the room of the President and Mrs. Cleveland.

You may imagine how interesting the visit has been for us. I have seen a great deal of the President in the house; and beside I have had three long drives with him alone. I think he never gave me his confidence as generously and fully. He is in good health, greatly to my relief; if there is any change it is in the burden of responsibility resting upon him; it may be

only imagination on my part, but the weight of the world seems to press visibly on his spirit. And yet I know no one who could bear it more quietly and bravely.

I constantly feel myself disagreeing in details, and sometimes important ones; but on the whole it is the old situation over again, — one honest, patriotic man making a heroic struggle against partisans and demagogues for good government! It is a fight all along the line. I have learned particulars of the silver struggle, not so much from him as from others. The amount of moral strength put forth in that emergency would almost have exhausted a less powerful nature. Congressmen, that is the political machine, scouted at and tried to prevent his election: this astonished them, and they have not forgiven him simply for being here. Now they — not all but many — are trying to trip him up at every turn. I believe that in the most important things he will come out as we all would wish. I can talk more fully and freely than I can write. I have seen several of the Cabinet and others. (He invited Commissioners Roosevelt and Procter to meet us — the first time the Roosevelts had ever been invited to dine at the White House — how is that for Harrison, of Roosevelt's own party!) I have preached against the spoils system from one end of the town and from one end of the Government to the other, and as yet without opposition or criticism. I have said to Cleveland himself the things I have said about

him — my Lincoln-Schurz, Cleveland-Schurz parallel and all. At my request Wilson, the hero of the silver and tariff bill, announced at the Board of Trade dinner that "Greatest among the reforms which have to be accomplished, is the reform of the Civil Service in national, in state and in municipal government," this last the very language of the Spoils League declaration! Wilson has promised me to do all in his power for the complete reform; and in Congress able and true friends of the reform are indeed rare.

What a strange institution this one-man Presidency is — this democratic-imperial institution: on this second floor is in full flow the family life; two children with their toys, all the paraphernalia of a happy household, with only a partition and scarce that between the headquarters — the bureau — the active executive power of the most powerful country the world has ever seen. Mrs. Gilder and I have come home from a ball; the family were at a Cabinet dinner. It is one o'clock and the President, all alone, without a clerk near, is working away at his desk in his office on decisions that may turn the course of modern history. I am going now to interrupt him and try to get him to go to bed. To see the conscience he puts into his work is a lesson to every worker; and there is so little consideration for him on the part of the 65 millions of the people he serves.

2 A.M. I've just been going over the whole consular service of the United States with the President —

and any number of other details. I don't know just what he thinks about it but I don't think the present methods are right, if for no other reasons than that it should not fall so heavily on the President himself.

To H. G.

EXECUTIVE MANSION, March 25, 1894.

When I got to the Arlington there was O'Brien, who had found a room for me in the neighborhood. There was also a letter from Mrs. Cleveland urging me to come over with my bag. But I went to the room and dressed and went over. Mrs. Cleveland was alone, and took me in to the President, who was expecting me. They both were so cordial and insistent that I had to bring my things over, and so here I am!

To-day it is rainy, a dull Easter, and I have been in all day so far (after dinner). No one is here, and though the President is so busy and full of anxious work, I have seen a great deal of him; and I can't refuse to think it is a comfort to him to have a sympathetic, disinterested friend so near. I have seen a good deal, also, of the two secretaries. I had a little dread that I might be *de trop* at this particular juncture, but never had a more kindly welcome. The children are in fine feather. Ruth recites verse with astonishing facility and Esther is the same perfect-tempered and twinkling child. To-day is her first day of short clothes. The President every once in a while steals away from his work and comes out to enjoy the

children. What a God's blessing they are to him under all this terrible pressure.

Of course I must be utterly non-committal as to my guesses as to his actions: but of this I am sure, whether it is to be *signature* or *veto*¹ the subject will be weighed purely from the patriot's standpoint, and reason for *either* action will be given that must appeal to all fair-minded men.

To Rodman Gilder

March 26, 1894.

I am having a very pleasant visit, made especially so by the hearty hospitality of my hosts, and this at a time when the crisis of responsibility and anxiety on the part of the President has been reached, and when not only the country but the whole world is holding its breath to know what decision he will make as to signing or vetoing the Bland Seigniorage Bill. It is now just midnight. I have been over calling on Postmaster-General Bissell; and Secretary Lamont and Dr. Bryant have just left. To-morrow these two and their wives and one or two officials start on a Southern military tour. The President is hard at work, as usual, in his office, alone. He is tired and borne down by the heavy weight of the country's troubles, but he has little time for rest. His best rest is the company of his wife and children. I never saw

¹ Mr. Cleveland vetoed this bill for the coinage of silver — known as the Bland Silver Bill or the Bland Seigniorage Bill.

any one enjoy his children more completely. He appreciates every cute and curious phase of babyhood. Some men take no interest, strangely enough, in very little babies, but the President has the sense not to lose the first phenomena of childhood. Babies are as different as grown people and much more amusing to watch, I think; and some daddies lose a good deal in not appreciating this fact. Now I admire, of course, a boy of your size; but for the life of me I could n't sit and watch you splutter and grab and grin and groan for half an hour!

Anti-Spoils League

The matter of the abolition of the "spoils system," to which my father refers so often in the foregoing letters, was one which enlisted his deepest interest and his untiring efforts. He was a member of the Civil Service Reform Association and served on its executive committee, and he carried on a campaign of public information by his written and spoken word. His most important service, however, was the organization of the Anti-Spoils League, a movement started at his own suggestion, for the nationalization of the anti-spoils crusade. Through the years of disappointment and struggle which preceded the realization of anything like a fair system of appointment for federal offices, my father's faith in the good intentions and ultimate action of the Cleveland Administration remained firm, and was in the end justified.

To Grover Cleveland

December 18, 1893.

To be read at the President's leisure — if he ever has any!

MY DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: —

With so many other matters pressing upon you I would not write at this moment were it not necessary for your information. In the first place, please see my letter in last night's "Post" showing your great service to the system of reform with which your fame is already identified.

Some weeks ago I suggested to the League that its work should be popularized, and they have adopted my plan for a national enrolment of all opposed to the spoils system, for the purpose of holding up the hands of all in office who support the reform, and of pressing the abolition of the spoils system in national, state and municipal government. I drew up the constitution, which is extremely brief, a mere declaration, and petition, and named it the Anti-Spoils League.

My belief is that this will make easier the advance of the reform from the executive side, and will sustain whatever you may yet do further toward signaling your Presidency with something like an abolition of the spoils system. There is a great activity in municipal reform just now, and the movement is meant to assist in that also.

I think you know I am not "one-idea'd" about this

matter. The "Century" has done good work, I am sure, in the currency matter — we would gladly go into the matter of the tariff, but that is too much party politics. As for the spoils system the disgust for it is growing, and people are more and more sensitive to any move in that direction. It is a curse to parties and a nuisance from every point of view; and I am sure that as far as the government goes it will get a pretty black eye before the fourth of March, 1897.

The Anti-Spoils League grew rapidly. In less than two months seven thousand names from every part of the country were sent in. My father wrote the circulars and cards which were used, although his name did not appear on them, and he and Mr. George McAneny were indefatigable in procuring new signatures. The officers of the League were Carl Schurz, president, William Potts, secretary, and Silas W. Burt, treasurer.

Writing to the President in April, 1894, four months after the founding of the League, my father said: —

"Our National 'Anti-Spoils League' is prospering greatly. It has now about ten thousand members in all parts of the Union. The most promising thing is the Southern sentiment. About one hundred and fifty papers in the South, both daily and weekly, are favoring the movement. Whereas the old Civil Service Reform Association existed in only about twenty-five communities, the Anti-Spoils League has a foothold in about nine hundred separate communities

in the United States! In some towns all the city officers have joined. There is to be a grand national round-up in Chicago next fall."

Addresses on Civic Ideals

My father's ideals of civic responsibility, which led him to take so keen an interest in political issues and reforms, are formulated in several addresses. On February 3, 1894, he spoke at a dinner of the New York Board of Trade and Transportation on what he described as "Civic Patriotism," and in June he delivered an address at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee.

Writing to Chancellor Kirkland of the University, who had invited him to speak, he says:—

"What would you think of an address from me entitled 'The Nation and the Citizens'? The fact is I hardly feel like going so far afield without saying some things that just now seem to be very needful to be said. I would plead for the highest ideal of citizenship, and for reforms which have nothing to do with the ordinary pullings and haulings of partisanship, but which good men in all parts are generally agreed upon. If I hit hard here and there it would not be anything different from the position taken in the editorial department of the 'Century,' where partisan politics are debarred advocacy. Of course the uses of culture and of institutions like Vanderbilt University would be part of my plea.

"If I can unload my heart of its burden on this subject, to some extent, I think I will make the effort to come among you and do my best. I am no orator, and if you think I am you have been misinformed. I have addressed colleges and public audiences in various places, but I am not particularly adapted to public speaking and may disappoint you from that point of view. Now after I have said all this, if you still want me I will lay aside everything and come.

"With regard to a literary theme: While I am with you, if there is any opportunity for extemporaneous talking, I will also be glad to say something in this direction, perhaps to a smaller and more special audience, and on some occasion when others are speaking, that is to say not a set and long address, but any suggestions that may occur to me from my experience as an editor, or otherwise. These subjects also are very dear to me, but at the present moment in our history I think that the duties of citizenship almost outweigh every other consideration. Perhaps it is that something in the blood of my Methodist preacher father occasionally gets the better of my profound love of literature and of all art."

He went to Nashville in June and delivered the address, calling it "The Citizen and the Nation." The morning after, he wrote to my mother: —

"I got through all right last night; the hall holds 800 or 1000 and is fearful to speak in, but I did better as to making myself heard than they feared. They

told me not to mind if some at the far end or in the gallery went out. But no one did, and their attention was intense for forty-five minutes. People were turned away from the door, and while of course it was no orational success, it was the most effective thing of the sort I have ever done. The applause was warm — and the congratulations were quite overwhelming. I felt that I had a message, and they all seemed to feel so, and talked about the significance of the address in a way that makes me feel it was worth the pilgrimage."


He delivered his "message" in verse as well as in prose, for, as he wrote in May, 1893: "I am to read before the Army of the Potomac, a long poem on the war. It will be the longest single poem I have ever written, and I hope it will have something of the passion and pathos of those great days."

This poem, "The Great Remembrance," read at the reunion of the Army of the Potomac in Boston on the 27th of June, formed the nucleus of a new book of verse. It is a slim volume, bound like its predecessor, "Two Worlds," in white vellum and decorated with gold lettering and a design by H. de K.

CHAPTER VIII
THE TENEMENT HOUSE COMMISSION AND SECOND
EUROPEAN SOJOURN
1894-1896

"VERY much to my surprise," my father wrote in May, 1894, "I found myself the other day appointed by the Governor to the Committee of Investigation in regard to the tenement houses of New York. Had I known that he intended appointing me, I should certainly have suggested some more expert person than myself. But I was not consulted in the matter, and since then I have been furthermore weighted with responsibility by being made chairman of the committee. It is a very painful duty, but one which I cannot shirk even in hot weather."

In this way my father's service on the New York Tenement House Commission of 1894 began. He was at first almost overwhelmed by the difficulties of the task before him, for it seemed to him that he was not properly equipped with the special knowledge and experience that such an undertaking required. It would mean spending the coming summer months in arduous and unaccustomed labor outside the realm of his already too numerous duties. "I feel very deeply the responsibility of membership in this important com-



mission," he wrote to Governor Flower, "and I accept the same both as a public duty and a personal honor."

With his election to the chairmanship he lost no time in organizing the work. Mr. Edward Marshall was made secretary of the commission, the other members of which were Dr. Cyrus Edson, Messrs. Roger Foster, Solomon Moses, George B. Post, John P. Schuchman, and W. D'H. Washington. The first step taken was to collect, as far as possible, the data and information already on record and to get in touch with the various city departments, the records or the work of which bore on the investigation. The next step was to lay out a definite and workable plan of campaign which should include the various aspects of the problem — the investigation of old and new tenement houses, of the race, nationality, and income of the people in them, of parks and playgrounds, lavatories, public baths, health regulations, water supply, and fire prevention. No detail of the work escaped my father's personal attention. With other members of the committee, he joined in the house-to-house investigation, which they had inaugurated. He "waded heart-deep in misery all summer long."

Tenement House Fires

One problem to which he gave particular attention was that of fire prevention. In order to understand the subject thoroughly he arranged to have Fire Chief

Bresnan call for him whenever a serious fire broke out at night in the tenement house district, no matter what the hour might be. Dressed in a fireman's helmet and rubber coat he would go to the scene of action, and, as soon as the fire was sufficiently under control, he would climb over the charred ruins of the building to discover where it had originated, and how and why it had spread so rapidly.

"My first acquaintance with Bresnan," he wrote in "Harper's Weekly" for January 15, 1895, "was formed upon reading in the newspaper one evening that a child had been burned in a tenement house fire. I went over to the engine house and introduced myself to Bresnan. He immediately had his horse hitched up and drove me to the house. From that beginning he took the deepest interest in the work of the committee. He took me with him to many fires. His accurate, scientific knowledge of how to deal with fires was something to be wondered at. He knew the botany of a fire; he knew its seed and stalk and flower; the effects of different methods of construction on it. His suggestions for building so as to prevent the spread of fire and smoke were of great value.

"One of the most exciting incidents of my life was driving to a fire with Bresnan through one of the most crowded parts of the East Side. Without sounding the gong once, he drove through the crowd without endangering one life. The quick ring of his horses' hoofs on the pavement was the only bell."

All this meant a long and exhausting summer's work; as he expressed it: —

"I am always busier than ever, but now I am busier even than that.

"I am living at this moment three (at least) separate lives; 1st, the magazine (tell me, when you get the November number if the Napoleon interests you and your friends); 2nd, Tenement House Committee work (of which I am chairman); 3rd, municipal campaign politics. I thought I had put poetry aside for the time being, but that flame will not down, and, in the midst of all, little neglected shoots of verse will spring up from the ashes. I put it behind me when I finished reading proofs for my new book — but it won't altogether stay in the shadow. This new book, with the closing song harking back to 'The New Day,' you will have in a few weeks, and when you get it look up the new pieces, and browse awhile among the old."

Five Books of Song

To G. E. Woodberry

September 16, 1894.


If you have not been too engrossed otherwise, I hope you have not been unvisited by the muse. As for me, I have heard some "voices," but have been much involved in my magazine work (getting the Napoleon started, etc.), and in the tenement work, and this last will now keep me enchained till the first of January pretty steadily. We should really have

another year of it — with another \$10,000; but we must do our best. I am also on the campaign committee of the Good Government Clubs; with weekly meetings for several months. I hope in no other year to be *forced* into so much public work.

Mrs. Gilder compels me to give you her love. She is having — or would be having, if she were so constituted — her head turned by praises from men and women for her letter on the suffrage. Did you see it in the "Critic"? The women seem to think that they have therein found a voice — I mean, of course, the "antis."

My book will be out in October — cut down to the bone — everything, nearly, revised; and with several omissions and over a dozen poems not gathered before. I will send it to you as soon as I may. There are a few you have not seen, including a dirge for E. F. H. (Miss Harwood), a woman friend of a lifetime. I hope you will like my "Unreturning" song.

This edition of his poems, called "Five Books of Song," was, as the name indicates, a collection of all his verse up to that time. It contained the poems of "The New Day," "The Celestial Passion," "Lyrics," "Two Worlds," and "The Great Remembrance," the essence of his poetic life for twenty years. The fact that this volume passed rapidly through five editions shows very clearly the growing appreciation of his verse.



Public Hearings and Trinity Corporation

In November, the commission, or committee, as my father usually called it, began a new phase of the work by inaugurating a series of public hearings at the old brown stone court-house in City Hall Park. At these hearings inspectors, experts, and witnesses of all kinds gave their reports in the form of answers to questions put by the chairman. In this way testimony as to the conditions in the tenement houses was obtained, under oath, and the discoveries of the committee were made known to the public. At this point the newspapers began to take an interest, and the people at large were informed as to actual conditions in the tenement house districts. No part of the commission's work was more important than this arousing of the public conscience, this exposure of conditions which hitherto had been allowed to exist, without protest, in the very heart of the city. In the course of the hearings certain facts came to light bearing upon the far from admirable conditions of a number of tenement houses owned by Trinity Church Corporation. This, together with the circumstance that Trinity was, for the second time, fighting the order of the Board of Health compelling it, in conformity to the law, to supply water on every floor of its tenement houses, brought down upon this church a veritable storm of public indignation. Up to this time Trinity had had things more or less its own way. It

had succeeded in having declared unconstitutional the water-supply law, and it had allowed one of the few breathing-places in the lower part of the city, St. John's Park, to be converted into a freight station. On the plea that the buildings were soon to be torn down and replaced by business structures, it had neglected certain of its tenement houses so long that they were in a condition of very serious disrepair. While the commission was holding its public meetings and bringing these facts to light, the Board of Health employed a member of the commission to carry the water-supply case before the Court of Appeals of the State of New York. There the decision of the lower court was reversed in an opinion by Judge Peckham, which declared the entire constitutionality of such laws enacted for the health and safety of the people. By this decision the danger which threatened the very heart of legislation in behalf of tenement house reform was averted.

To the attorney of the Trinity Church Corporation my father wrote: —

“There evidently has been a misunderstanding as to the attitude of the Tenement House Committee towards Trinity Church — natural, perhaps, in the circumstances. We have simply not avoided our duty. It surely would have been cowardly had the committee in the public hearings confined its inquiries among obscure owners of inferior tenements.

“I trust that the work of our committee, con-

ducted as it has been with tireless energy, and I may say devotion, as well as a sense of justice, may not be complicated with any individual or corporate considerations. As I publicly stated, the committee has addressed itself to the cure of conditions, as was its sworn duty. Its report is not an attack on individuals or corporations, but a calm and scientific statement of the whole case, with a view to remedies which should command the support of all good men."

Report to the Legislature

While the last of the hearings in the old brown stone court-house were still in progress, the report of the commission to the Legislature was being prepared. This double task, exacting in the extreme, was, moreover, imposed upon men whose lives were already filled to the brim.

"Saint-Gaudens," wrote my father to one of his co-workers, "once remarked to La Farge, with whom he was collaborating in connection with the Church of the Ascension, as follows: 'Life is a tug.' Four words never conveyed more positive and truthful information with fewer syllables and a more downright presentation of the effect of inanimate nature upon the soul. Somehow or other that phrase, 'Life is a tug,' has done me lots of good in moments of stress, and the next few weeks are to be moments of stress for all the members of the committee who are engaged on the report.

"Life is a tug!"

On January 17, 1895, the report was submitted to the Legislature, and the commission ceased officially to exist.

"There is nothing in the law," my father wrote on that day to Cleveland, "requiring us to report to the President of the United States; but also there is nothing to forbid sending you this printed record of your friend's absorbing occupation of the last eight months. This report is long enough, but our supplement with the public hearings, maps, photographs, etc., etc., contains perhaps two hundred thousand words besides.

"It is, I suppose, the most thorough piece of work of the kind yet done in America, by what they call a 'spurt' — in and out again in half a year. I'm pretty much used up myself, but hope it will not be without results."

In "Leslie's Weekly" for March 28, 1895, he gives a summary of the report from which I have made the following extract: —

"The recommendations of the tenement house committee may be said to consist of two parts; those which have been presented to the Legislature in the form of bills, and those which consist of general recommendations which may be carried out by the city government with or without additional legislation.

"One of the enactments presented to the Legislature looks to the destruction of unsanitary buildings,

with a provision for reasonable compensation to the owners in case of such destruction.

"Another important recommendation is as to the construction of tenement houses hereafter to be built, requiring more light and air for their inhabitants and greater safety from fire. Precautions are also suggested for the prevention of fire in tenements now existing. The Committee paid great attention to this question and made the surprising discovery that, whereas the tenement houses in New York number about thirty-one per cent. of all the buildings in the city, the tenement house fires number about fifty-three per cent. A fire in a tenement house, even where life is not lost, or personal injury is not reported, always creates a panic, and almost always destroys property, very often totally uninsured, and brings untold distress.

"The bills include, furthermore, an increase in the height of basement ceilings; suggest the restriction as to the use of wall paper in tenements; require the better lighting of halls; and offer further precautions against that overcrowding which increases the danger to the city of infectious diseases. Also additional sanitary inspectors and policemen are provided for, it being found that the Health Department with its present force is utterly unable to do the required work in relation to the tenements.

"The law requiring the owners of tenements and lodging houses to file notice of names and addresses is

strengthened. Separate laws are also submitted, breaking the deadlock as to Mulberry Bend and two other small parks acquired under the Small Parks Act; also requiring some small parks, partly to be used as playgrounds, in the crowded lower east side of the city; and requiring that no school shall be constructed hereafter unprovided with a playground. The recommendations without laws attached, refer to rapid transit, municipal bathing establishments, drinking fountains, lavatories, electric lights, extension of smooth pavements, sufficient school accommodations in general, and especially additional kindergartens. It is suggested that a law be enacted which might tend to the prevention of houses of prostitution in tenement houses."

Legislating in Albany

Although with the submission of these bills and recommendations his official connection with the work ended, he labored unceasingly throughout the rest of the winter in matters of tenement house reform. He not only did everything in his power to have the bills put through the Legislature, making repeated trips to Albany for this purpose, but he also organized and attended public meetings in all parts of the city, wrote for magazines and newspapers, and was ready at every fresh development to answer questions and discuss new suggestions.

"For some days before and for some time since the



Report went in," he wrote in January, "I have been, and am now, confined to the house. Meantime I am down for the mass meeting on Wednesday night and to preside on Thursday night. The Lord only knows whether I will be able to do any of these things."

The mass meeting referred to here was organized to interest people in the new legislation then under discussion at Albany. Early in the meeting Henry George, who was present, was asked by my father to say a few words for the cause. Thereupon this enthusiastic propagandist took the opportunity to attack all tenement house legislation as foolish, futile, and ridiculous. He turned the meeting, so far as he was able, into a single-tax meeting, on the plea that all the evils of tenement house conditions were due to poverty, and that poverty could instantly be cured by the passage of his single-tax bill.

"I said to my friend Henry George, after his speech last night," my father explained at a meeting on the following day, "that it was a great pity that there had not been, on a practical committee of this kind, a genuine poet like Mr. George. Now I confess that the reason we did not draw a bill to abolish poverty was simply this: there was not a man on the committee who knew how! Now we know very well that there are men in this community who know how, for they have said so themselves, but they were unfortunately not sworn members of the committee. One gentleman who knows how is my eloquent, persuasive

and good-natured friend Mr. George. What an easy thing for the committee simply to have drawn up a single-tax bill and submitted it to the present Legislature! Meantime, do you know how many human beings are being maimed and burned annually in our tenements?"

In the letters that follow my father describes some of the incidents in that long winter campaign which ended in the final passage of the four bills suggested by the commission.

To Rodman Gilder

March 10, 1895.

Along with the magazine work, etc., I have been under frightful pressure while at home on sick leave fighting the Philistines off the Tenement House Bills in Albany. I appeared before the Committee on Cities, and made some concessions, hauled off and peppered away in the papers. I have had to hire several assistants; one, a young Russian Hebrew named Litman, is industrious, willing, and intelligent in four languages, Russian, French, English, and German.

To H. G.

ALBANY, February 26, 1895.

I hope I got along in the Senate Committee as well as Brentano said. He was very enthusiastic. I hope the papers will give a fair account of my little speech.

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I appeared before both committees separately and had to fight all alone; though Brentano and Marshall were along, and two men from the Health Board. The Senate Committee paralyzed the objectors by promptly adopting some of the things they were most opposed to!

To Edward Marshall

March 11, 1895.

The battle is on! Litman, Leverick, the lawyer Reynolds, and others are at work again. I have been shut up in my room for a week or so, but Litman and I have made the dust fly. The papers have responded splendidly, all except one, which unless I have overlooked something does not seem to care to be in at the death. The "Herald," "Tribune," "Times," "Mail," "World" and the "Evening Post," to say nothing of other papers, have hammered away like good fellows.

March 21, 1895.

I spent Tuesday again in Albany at Senator O'Conner's suggestion, appearing once more before the Senate Cities' Committee, spending a good deal of time with Mr. Ainsworth and with various members of the Senate and Assembly. Of course I am handicapped a good deal by the fact that the leaders who have charge of our bills are really unacquainted both with the general subject and the details of the bills, whereas they are met by critics who are not only members

of the two houses, but who are themselves builders for tenement house owners and who have the great advantage of being official representatives of our city.

However, the general sentiment is strongly in favor of our measures and they will pull through. It is very unfortunate that the only member of our commission who is able to go to Albany constantly and wrestle with these people is a "literary feller."

I must tell you that not only is the Mulberry Bend bill a law, but that on Tuesday, the Senate, before I got there, passed the East Side Park bill and the School Playground bill, they having already passed the Assembly.

Judge Peckham told me on Tuesday that our report, as published by the "Times," had been of great service to him in writing his opinion [on the Trinity water-supply case].

To Roger Foster

March 27, 1895.

I went to Albany Monday afternoon and spent two hours before the opening of the Session in conference with Mr. Ainsworth and Messrs. Lawson and Miller. At Ainsworth's suggestion and with his concurrence, several amendments further were accepted and several absolutely rejected; especially those that would have changed the existing laws of the Health Department.

Then at Ainsworth's request I sat by him during the debate. We were surrounded by maps, diagrams and documents, and I was able to pile into his ear and hand all the necessary data and material for his presentation of the subject and especially for overthrowing all the amendments offered on the floor which were obnoxious. The first adverse amendment was only defeated by a majority of one, but by this time Ainsworth got his blood and his voice up and stampeded the enemy, who finally withdrew all opposition, declaring that the sentiment of the house showed that it was futile to go on. The bill was then triumphantly ordered to a third reading and I trust it will pass next Tuesday, when Ainsworth wishes me to be again present.

To A. B. Mason

March 31, 1895.

Somewhat to my surprise I find that the hardest, most pressing and unescapable work is that thrust upon me by the necessity of seeing the bills through the Legislature. Three have already passed, but the fourth is the most complicated, and requires the most constant watching. If I were not at hand in Albany or here, at the time of votes or conferences, the changes that must be made would result in infinite mischief, both as to our proposed measures and existing sanitary and building laws.

To Edward Marshall

April 5, 1895.

I send you a copy of the Post referring to last Tuesday's affair in the Assembly. As usual the papers miss all the amusing parts. I again sat by Mr. Ainsworth and, as somebody said, used him for a telephone. But with his usual quickness and brilliancy he expanded and improved upon what I said to him.

I had made a copy of your letter received the day before, and when Mr. Hamilton again tried to amend the bill in the way we did not like, and began to talk about areas and percentages, Ainsworth made me stand up and look over his shoulder, while he read in clarion tones your statement about the decrease of crime in London.

April 6, 1895.

I send you some notices of the public hearing before the Mayor yesterday. The room was full of advocates of the bill, including not only representatives of the principal philanthropic societies, Messrs. Moses, Edson, Foster, and Gilder of our committee, but also a good crowd of tenement house people, from Good Government Clubs, etc.; Archibald of the Labor Union (and of the Committee of Seventy), several ladies, etc.

By the way, the two field days we had in the Assembly were as good as a circus. I think it was after your letter was read, that Hamilton said some-

thing about the Bible that made Ainsworth declare, in his most penetrating tenor, that if the gentleman from New York would familiarize himself with that book, he would find that the Bible was stamped upon every line of the Tenement House Bill!

As to the hearing yesterday, I am glad we were able to make such a demonstration, first because I was a little afraid that the Mayor might object to the mandatory provisions of the bills, as he is on record against the cities being compelled by the Legislature to spend money, second because the showing ought to help the passage of our other bill.

To Roger Foster

April 7, 1895.

It would tire you for me to go into all the details of the work that is going on daily over the large tenement House bill. The final amendments, or I hope the final ones, were made last Tuesday. Suffice it to say that I have watched every word and that no real injury has been done to the bill, in fact it is in some respects more practicable and useful than at the beginning.

I learned on Friday, and yesterday again, of a dangerous conspiracy here in New York to kill the bill, probably in the Senate. I do not think they can do it; but they can make an enormous amount of trouble. For the last three days I have been reaching out in every direction for support; the fight will be hot.

To Hon. D. E. Ainsworth

April 9, 1895.

I think the enemies are, at least in part, those who worked against us at the beginning. All that was valuable or reasonable in their various suggestions was adopted. They now simply mean to "kill the bill." They want no legislation in the interest of the occupants, but everything in the interests of the owners.

Finally in this same April he was able to write to Mr. Foster:—

"It is indeed satisfactory to know that all four of our bills have passed the Legislature, and three of them are now laws.

"Taking our four laws together, I think more has been accomplished than ever before in the same length of time. I consider the reversal of the Trinity decision virtually a part of our work."

Shortly after this the fourth and most important bill became a law. The task which the commission had set itself was successfully accomplished. "It is no disparagement to others" — I quote from an editorial in the "Tribune" for May 11, 1898 — "to say that to Mr. Gilder, the chairman of the commission, the credit for this result is chiefly due. Mr. Gilder has had little experience in the field of legislation, but an intimate acquaintance with 'practical politics' could not have served this community one half so well as it has been served by his perfect recti-



MR. GILDER IN "TWELFTH NIGHT" COSTUME



tude, his unselfish zeal, his tact and his urbanity. Mr. Gilder is a reformer, but he is also a gentleman. He did not appear at public hearings on his bills with a chip on his shoulder. There was no exasperating assumption of superiority on his part. Wherever tenement house reform needed a champion he was sure to be present, but there was no rancor or stubbornness in his contention. He made frank acknowledgment of his opponents' courtesy, and of the instruction which he had derived from their arguments. He was always ready to concede a point which did not sacrifice a principle. He commended not only himself but his cause to those with whom the controversy brought him into contact, and he finally won against obstacles which at the outset seemed insuperable."

Results of the Commission's Work

The results of the legislation were direct and immediate. Before July, 1896, the Board of Health, under the new statute, had condemned two hundred tenements as "unfit for human habitation," and the buildings, mostly rear tenements, had been razed. Mulberry Bend Park was completed and turned over to the public, and two new parks were made. It was suggested that one of these parks should be called by my father's name, but he did not wish that to be done for the reasons given in the following letter to Jacob Riis: —

May 13, 1896.

I have been told of the generous thought of some of you good people as to suggesting that one of the parks taken under the Tenement House New Park bill should have my name. I need hardly say how touched I am that anyone should, for even a moment, entertain a design so honoring to me. But I sincerely hope that the suggestion will not be urged. There are several reasons for my feeling about it, aside from the general consideration that it would be a doubtful precedent to name a park after a living citizen. One of these reasons is that in the interest of public commissions like that which honored me by making me its chairman, and stood by me as its chairman, their work should not be complicated with personal considerations such as would attach to the selection of the name of a single member of a commission for so great a distinction.

I put the matter of my opposition on public grounds, you see; personally, I should think it more just that such an honor should fall to the name of Riis, for instance, or, some other name representing years of work on these lines. But I have said enough, I trust, to make you understand that I am deeply grateful, more than I can tell, — and very much set against it.

In a letter dated April, 1898, my father summarizes the work actually accomplished: —

“As a direct result of the tenement legislation

may be mentioned the better building laws, the destruction of the worst tenements in the city, the opening of two new parks called for by one of our laws, the finishing of others for which we furnished the money, and the plan of having an open air playground connected with every school in the city.

"Other matters recommended by the committee but not put into the form of laws by them, and which are progressing, are public baths and lavatories. In addition to this, partly as a result of the stirring up of the subject, more model tenements have been built, and throughout the United States efforts have been made to improve the condition of the tenements in the crowded parts of the cities."

To John T. Nagle, Chief of the Bureau of Municipal Statistics of the City of New York

February 2, 1898.

It may interest you to know that the bureau now under your charge was an outgrowth of the work of the Tenement House Committee of 1894. The suggestion of such a bureau was made by Mr. Jacob A. Riis in his testimony before that committee, and I took up the agitation of it from that time. When the new charter was in progress I renewed this agitation, the result being the appointment by Mayor Strong of a committee consisting of Dr. E. R. L. Gould, Dr. Albert Shaw and myself, who were asked to draw up proper sections for the charter. This we did, the actual

composition thereof being by Dr. Gould. I should say that Mr. Arthur W. Milbury was also active in promoting the matter.

This particular bureau was unfortunately short-lived. Writing in November, 1906, to Mr. Robert F. Cutting about the establishment of an Institute of Municipal Research, my father says of this first bureau: —

“It was not conducted in a way that brought success, being unsupported by the Tammany administration, and in the revision of the charter this bureau was omitted. Something of the sort has been re-established, but it is subsidiary and insufficient. Such a bureau, properly run and intelligently conducted, would be of great service.

“But a genuine Bureau of Municipal Statistics, such as exists in some of the European cities, would not take the place of an Institute for Municipal Research, such as you describe, and I think that the continuous work that would be done by such an institute would help to improve conditions, where such help is greatly needed — namely, in our municipalities. As it is, here in New York, not only are the higher authorities ignorant of the details of governmental service in the various departments, but the chiefs of departments are ignorant of the details of their own departments. Our Tenement House Committee of 1894 was able to present to the Park Department a


fuller map of the city parks than the department itself possessed."

Another outgrowth of the work of the Tenement House Commission of 1894 was the formation of the City and Suburban Homes Company. In 1896 an Improved Housing council was held. My father was chairman of this council and an active member of the City and Suburban Homes Company, the object of which is to prove that decent tenement-houses can be built and maintained with a reasonable return upon the money invested.

Illness and Second European Sojourn

"The winter has been a fearfully busy and anxious one for me," my father wrote to his sister in February, 1894, "on account of my official work, which is ended, thank Heaven. I have had a mild grippe and have been ordered away to rest, perhaps to Washington."

The "mild grippe" was but the beginning of more serious troubles. As spring approached it became evident that a break in routine work was absolutely necessary. So in May the whole family sailed for Europe, to be away from home almost eighteen months. It was not a time of complete rest, as the following letters indicate; and he carried on his magazine work all the while. The trip was nevertheless full of happy experiences, especially that part of it spent in Egypt and the Holy Land, the memory of which remained with him always.



From R. W. G.'s Journal


We sailed from New York on the S.S. Normania, Hamburg Line, on May 23, 1895. As we neared the British shore the old, insatiable appetite for the old world seemed to revive in my breast! Ah, what a fiery and unappeasable appetite that is; what a happy passion, how sweet the thirst as the shores of wonder draw near again. A little fear I had that the bloom had been rubbed off by the first contact, sixteen years ago; but though it was different, the glamour was still there!

Sometimes this mood of travel, this "passionate pilgrimage," seems a strange and unmeaning thing — a mood to awaken from and to spurn with a vivid sense of the active duties of life. And then one remembers that for so many centuries of humanity has this wandering been a specially recognized activity itself; not a thing to be despised, but in many circumstances not only respectable but desirable. It is a passion of the heart as old as cultured mankind.

Berlin and the Young Emperor

June 1st. We came to Berlin in the afternoon. A dusty ride, but a country rich and interesting to me. The first impression of Berlin is astonishment as to the number of parks, big and little, and the bowery look of the whole place as compared with New York.

One feels a certain strain in the military dominance, as of a new empire — *nouveau* great — "and, by



Hookey, we won't be trounced out of it!" After all, there is a certain ludicrous lack of repose in the idea of this energetic young emperor rushing about and prodding his soldiers to see if they are sound. "Look sharp, Boys, or Alsace will slip away in the dark!" —or "Wake up!—is that the big bear I see?" "Bing, bang, puff; attention, present arms; pout out your breast, make ready, or somebody will steal your cheese!"

The Emperor (from whom on two successive days we had a touch of the hat) is more amiable in actual appearance than his pictures give warrant for. He is indefatigable. Captain Evans, our attaché, explains to me the perfection of the military machine here, which he thinks the best, on the whole, in the world, and it is under the Emperor's almost furious management. Pity the military power that will set it in motion in opposition!

One sometimes puts it this way to himself: here are honesty and honor and respect, including self-respect, in the details of local and general government, — cities models of good government — the country run so as to command the fearful respect of all the powers. Germany is at peace and safe: the local police of large cities (under state control is this police) doing its work well, and the army with the Emperor at its head policing the empire. All things move on smoothly, apparently without the corruption and scandals in the suffrage and in state and national affairs (Congressional) which we see in America; and

the price paid is the refusal of freedom to abuse the powers that be, and that keep order for all — what we would call an almost total lack of freedom. As a young man said to me, "We not only cannot *print* what we think, but we cannot even *say* what we think." Moreover, those who think for themselves find their careers made difficult. This military domination has a childish, unnatural and unmanly side to it.

He must have written, about this time, these lines "from the notebook of an American tourist in Germany:" —

Forbidden

"Es ist Strengsten Untersagt"

A Yankee in Deutschland declared:

"I know a fine Fräulein here;

Of the Bangor girls she's the peer.

I'll wed her at once," he declared.

"Oh, no," said the Polizei.

Said the Yankee, "Why?"

"You cannot at once be wed

It is strengthily undersaid;

You first must be measured and weighed, and then

Tell where you were born, and why and when."

Then the Yankee in Deutschland declared:

"Well, instead we will go on a spin

Through the beautiful streets of Berlin,

On our 'bike,'" the Yankee declared.

"Oh, no," said the Polizei.

Said the Yankee, "Why?"

"You cannot go cycling instead,

It is strengthily undersaid;

You first must be measured and weighed, and then

Tell where you would wheel, and why and when."

Then the Yankee in Deutschland declared:
"Never mind, we will go to the play,
Your pretty new hat to display.
It is worth it," the Yankee declared.
"Oh, no," said the Polizei.
Said the Yankee, "Why?"
"We object to the hat on the head,
It is strengthily undersaid;
It must first be measured and weighed, and then
Tell where it was made, and why and when."

Then the Yankee in Deutschland declared:
"If one must forever be worried
Like this, he had better be buried,
And be done with it," he declared.
"Oh, no," said the Polizei.
Said the Yankee, "Why?"
"If you do we will break your head,
For it's strengthily undersaid;
You must first be measured and weighed, and then
Tell why you were born at all, and when,
And promise never to do it again."
Said the Yankee, "Which" and "Why?"
"Both," answered the Polizei.

A Venetian Wedding

From Berlin they went to Venice, whence this letter to Mr. Woodberry is dated: —

CASA ALVISI,
June 26, 1895, and other days.

It has been a year since the 23d of May last when we left New York. We have thought much of you and this day of the Venetian wedding that brought us to Venice seems a fitting one to make that desired connection with the Poet of the North Shore. You must not

expect a journal from me — descriptions of Hamburg, Berlin, Potsdam, Sans Souci, the Spreewald (get me to tell you about that), Cassel, Paris, Basel, Milan, etc.

When I began this letter they were singing “*Trovatore*” on the Grand Canal; I write from the exquisite “*casa*” of Mrs. Gilder’s sister, Mrs. Bronson — from the inkstand used by Browning many a time. It has been a strange and beautiful wedding. Our niece is probably as fine a jewel as any in the Rucellai family into which she is marrying; she is so happy and the young lieutenant seems so unaffectedly happy and of so sincere and bright a nature that one cannot but be made most cheerful by it. The whole thing was most prettily Venetian. You should have seen the procession from the house (which is just opposite the Salute) in which the President of the New York Tenement House Commission conducted in a gondola his special charge, the Marchesa Ginori, one of the groom’s sisters, — the princess, his other sister, being in another gondola, — and so by twos the two families and their intimates passed the Square of St. Mark and beneath the Bridge of Sighs, stopping at a low entrance just this side of the second bridge (which with the little square near was full of the Venetian populace), then through a long cavernous passage to a broad and endless stairway in the Patriarch Cardinal’s palace; then up and up to the marriage room, then the unusual ceremony. I tell you all this to bring one day in Venice before you.

HERINGSdorf, THE BALTIC, PRUSSIA,
August 24, 1895.

Did your ears burn during the past few weeks, when Norman and I, and Aubrey de Vere and I, tossed your name back and forth in London. Norman was for a while running the morning "Chronicle," in the absence of his chief; and tremendously busy, the busiest man in London. Notwithstanding, he had me to lunch twice. By contrast the least busy man in London was your other London friend, Aubrey. I was able to look him up only at the last of my visit. It was very good of him, as I missed him at the club, to call several times at the Cavendish in Jermyn Street to see me. One day after his first call I had a communication from him delivered in person and read in his presence. It was to invite me to the hospitality, not of his club, not of his hearth and table, no, something far finer and more truly and spiritually hospitable — a prince could not have done so much for me; 1st, would I walk with him in London's parks; or 2nd, would I visit the National Gallery and have him point out some of his favorite early masters; or 3rd, would I go with him to Westminster Abbey! I chose the Abbey and we sat before the graves of his late, immortal friends, and in the presence of their mortal remains and carved memorials, he would tell me what one illustrious dead man said to him kindly of the other illustrious dead man; the two now cheek by jowl beneath the pavement of Westminster. Wander-

ing about, we came in a far distant *new* poets' corner, upon the marble statue of Wordsworth. Did it look like? I asked — "Yes," he said, "it has his look of contemplation." Also he pointed out the marble monument of the de Vere of Elizabeth's time, a fine old knightly tomb which you have seen. The next evening he came in to tell me how grieved he was that it was not this day instead of yesterday that I had been with him in the church, for there had been beautiful music; and then, after a storm, the sun had burst forth and had sent an unearthly light through all the Abbey, something unseen before by him, as if spirits beat their wings on high; all was transformed as the mountains in Wordsworth's country sometimes are, becoming glorified. He said he could hardly enjoy it, for sorrow that I had not too chanced upon the strange sight.

In London I had long and serious talks with Morley and Sidney Colvin (I had met Colvin before). Morley is a commanding figure in literature and politics; I found him a great admirer of Lincoln and sent him both Lincoln's Life and Works; in his very next speech he quoted Lincoln with effect.

But how can I tell you of our days in Warwickshire; our evenings on the Avon, far up above the rapids and the dam; of the Stratford bells that chimed us into a sort of wildness of delight as we passed along a lovely reach of the river that Sunday evening, ever memorable in these noddles; of Charlecote; the dream-

iest thing, the most strangely affecting the imagination, of anything seen by me this time in England; remote, complete, of another time, and that Shakespeare's, untouched by any later thing. Nearly sixty miles we drove and rowed through that enchanted land of Warwick. Then on to Chester and heard, after securing seats with the greatest difficulty, Gladstone's latest, perhaps his last great speech.

Coming hither we spent a morning in Brussels and an afternoon on the field of Waterloo. The latter was to me really exciting — surprising. Our modern battlefields are so wide spread, this was like the place of struggle between two demi-gods; just a footing for heroes. Wellington and Napoleon almost literally crossed swords.

We have had much to trouble us on this trip. But good health seems to be taking the place of anxious illness. My time of sailing is delayed to September 11. I have made many tenement house studies here; have done a pile of work for the magazine; have seen many things; and written one poem and thought of others, beside gathering spiritual and poetical material for the rest of my mortal days! The deaths of Glave¹ and Bernheim are very grievous. I seldom have been so tired and troubled on account of illness in my family as since I left home in May. So it has been a mottled time, like life in general and everywhere.

¹ James Edward Glave, the English Explorer, who died in Africa.

America needs poets and I hope you will not give up the fight.


My excuse for raving on so about my journey is that you will not listen to a word of it when I arrive.

Later.

I have had a charming sonnet from de Vere with a very de Vere-like letter about our delightful visit to the Abbey — and to the National Gallery. Is n't that beautiful? The visit to the Gallery was entirely in his mind! I would no more deny it to him than I would deprive him of the "real presence." To him my dream presence is a real presence, which he cherishes in pleasant thoughts of those good old pictures of the soul, his favorites, which we saw together! I swear I was there; though not in the flesh, and I believe I could point out the pictures our spirits saw together.

LONDON, November 20, 1895.

Yesterday I spent the middle of the day at Farringford. The young Lord Tennyson was very unaffected, simple, manly, and extremely hospitable and agreeable. He took me in to see his exquisite old mother, eighty-three years of age, almost a spirit in her bed-ridden life. She lies like a saint, on a large couch opposite a large window looking out on a distant Italian-like bay with Scotch firs doing duty for stone pines in the foreground. It was a dull English day, but in



summer it is said to be all strikingly Italian. After lunch, Hallam Tennyson took me up into his father's study. He smoked a pipe Tennyson fashion and I some cigarettes, and we had a mighty good talk ranging over modern English and American literature, interspersed with readings from his treasures and anecdotes of and opinions by his father. Some of these will *not* appear in his book — and I hope the Lord will let me forget them so as not to run any risk of being the one through whom such frank confidence might leak out. He put in my hands a handsomely bound long and narrow volume containing the very first drafts of the divisions of "In Memoriam" — the most precious relic he possessed.

If you hear of us in Africa or Sicily or the moon next, don't be surprised. Rodman is busy in London and the other children are well placed here.

THE STRAITS OF MESSINA,
February 3, 1896. R.M.S. Austral.

MY DEAR AND UNFAITHFUL CORRESPONDENT: —

Out there under the shadow of a fixed cloud, which for its fixedness we know to be *Ætna*, lies in the evening twilight your *Taormina*. For thirty or forty days we have seen few clouds and little rain. Passing this afternoon near *Stromboli* it was perfect in outline; and film beyond film of shade appeared beyond it the sister island of *Æolis*. *Scylla* was distinct and lovely, half in sunshine and half in shade; as evening comes

on the clouds above Sicily are heavy and in keeping with its old and sometimes monstrous myths.

Our resolution to go to Egypt was rather sudden, as we had given it up. But at last we found that the children would let us; and it seemed desirable for H.'s sake. She has had bad colds, but is better at last and enjoyed Italy, the Riviera by a marvelous moonlight, and the Sistine Chapel. We had the pictures, day before yesterday morning, all to ourselves.

I don't know why I go on writing to a correspondent who sends one communication only in a winter: but look out! the galled jade — the neglected fruit tree — the abandoned voyager —

H. makes little notes in color wherever we go — a journal in color — quick but memorial. She will never show them to you if you never write.

Egypt and Syria

To W. W. Ellsworth

ON THE NILE, February 14, 1896.

"One, two, three — on! — tch, tch, tch; — Harrza! Harrza! Huh! Huh, Harrza! Whack; whack; whack; gallop, gallop, Owooh! Harrza! (Whack, whack.) All right?" "Yes, but don't beat him." "All right — no hurry?" "Yes, no hurry! Don't beat him so!" (Whack, whack.) "Why the devil do you beat him, he's going like thunder, anyhow, and as for you, you're nearly dead." "No, not tired," and so with galloping

and forced races with donkeys — here we are at the Step Pyramid and the tomb of Ti and the whole business of Memphis and its Necropolis.

I knock under! There's nothing like the Nile, and Egypt in general. Mrs. Gilder's cough and cold began to worry me. Egypt has cured her; and set me up too. This is our real vacation. You never said a word too much!

We must do something notable about Egypt! I'm doing a bit of thinking and we'll all talk it over when we come back. Talk about England! It's the United States that has annexed Egypt! At least Americans spend about half the money here that comes from foreigners and the tide is apparently rising.

I've been reading the Old Testament to-day! I feel as if I never knew anything before coming to Egypt.

To G. E. Woodberry

MENA HOUSE HOTEL, PYRAMIDS, CAIRO,
March 14, 1896.

We have had a most delightful Egyptian visit, now drawing to a close. We went up to the First Cataract on the Nile, visiting the most interesting monuments.

For several days (and nights) we have haunted the Pyramids, the Sphinx and the Desert of Sahara. One night after sunset we went on camels, with our Bedouin, two hours into the desert, coming home by


starlight past the lonely Sphinx and solemn Pyramids. Last night I went out alone, climbed the hill, and sat at the base of Cheops and looked up at Orion and Jupiter and the same Great Bear and North Star that one sees from Cape Cod. Old Cheops in the dark is a frightening personage — the first night that we visited him we felt like running for our lives.

To-day we have been to some of the oldest and most interesting pictured tombs in Egypt; and the Apis Tombs. They are the most other-worldly things! — great caverns with sarcophagi that look as if quarried here by magic and not by man.

We are on our way to Greece *via* Jerusalem. It seems like a dream, too strange to be actual.

BAALBEC, SYRIA, March 22, 1896.

The snow is on Lebanon; and the dew is on Hermon; and the watercresses of the fountain of Baalbec are sweet to the palate. Baalbec seems to begin with Egypt — run through Phœnicia and Persia and Greece and Rome and end in the very magnificence of ruin. We thought we had experienced all that could be experienced, all that could be imagined of the Cyclopean in Egypt — and lo! the stones of the ancient temple of Baal are mightier and more unbelievable than the gigantic blocks of the Egyptian temples — and crowning all, the grace and majesty of the Corinthian classics.



To R. U. Johnson

April 8, 1896.

We have seen Beirut, Baalbec, Damascus, Jerusalem, Jericho, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea, including the Easter feasts and scenes in Jerusalem, the most astounding of which was the famous ceremony of the so-called Greek Fire.

I am full of emotions and ideas of all kinds from this unexpected journey to the Holy Land. It is as tremendous in its effects upon the mind as the voyage to Egypt.

I expect an enormous mail at Athens. We may, indeed, be able to stay there only a day or two. Already the pains and cares of life press down again upon the soul. Is there a "new Jerusalem," indeed, free from its Gethsemane, and its Calvary, — its Via Dolorosa?

To Dr. F. E. Dewhurst

April 2, 1897.

There are some thoughts which one has in the Holy Land which are almost frightening to put forth. A man sometimes thinks that his mind is completely freed, except from such constraint as is imposed by the welfare of others, but there are doubts that assail those most used to doubt, which it is difficult to face. One learns, at any rate in Judea, the realities of the life of Christ, and one sees or thinks he sees, where the Orient has painted the unrealities. But the real-

ities themselves are so poignant that the unbeliever finds himself believing more intensely, more passionately than the so-called believer. As for me and mine, we were so moved, so overwhelmed, by one presence that our humor was somewhat different from that of some of our orthodox neighbors, who were making merry about us.

To G. E. Woodberry

ATHENS, GREECE, May 2, 1896.

Yes, Athens is "violet wreathed." The skies, the mountains, the plains, the islands and the sea are alive with the same beauty that took the soul of Phidias and of Sophocles. To us, on account of sickness and anxiety, it has been a sort of tragic splendor.

I wanted you to know that especially in Greece you were remembered.

PARIS, June 22, 1896.

I had a feeling that something was wrong, so your letter did not find me altogether unprepared for its burden of sorrow. It was not so very long ago that I had this same experience, first with my own mother, then with her sister, my aunt, who was almost a mother to me. H. too, not long since suffered in the same way, so we know from experience as well as from sympathy what you have gone through. Why is so natural a grief so heavy! And yet all such griefs, the mortal griefs, are almost equally heavy; though the death and the

suffering of one's children is perhaps the worst of all but one sorrow. The "worst of all" stared me in the face — or so I believed — in Greece; and I will never quite recover from that strain. In the midst of it, another unexpected climax in the condition of our oldest girl; enforced and terribly anxious absence, prolonged by H.'s illness — but why should I pour out my troubles to you who have an ever-present unhappiness. With us the skies are momentarily brighter, except that there must now be my own absence of months, the entire summer and part of the fall, from wife and children. I tell you it is a hard world, and I look around and see others even more heavily struck.

I expect to sail on the 20th, from Liverpool. R. U. J.'s condition is such that he must have months of complete rest. This means a most busy summer, but perhaps this is the best thing that can happen to me if my strength keeps up. I am glad that you have kept your muse alive. I have written some things that I hope you will like. And I believe I never did so much thinking in my life as in these last six months.

CHAPTER IX
MUNICIPAL POLITICS
1896-1900

IMMEDIATELY on his return from Europe in the spring of 1896, my father found himself drawn into the whirlpool activities of his old life. Among these, the affairs of the magazine were especially exacting.

"There is no denying it," he wrote to Mr. Woodberry, "I have the hardest work of my life before me. The changing conditions have now completely turned over, and I must work out an entirely new editorial problem, or be counted an old horse, too cranky to learn new tricks. Between you and me and the barber, I like it not. The steam whistle attachment which you can see applied nowadays even to peanut stands in the winter streets; the vulgarizing of everything in life and letters and politics and religion, all this sickens the soul. But one feels better in the midst of the fight than when one looks on from a foreign shore, whence the permanent forces for good, and the current triumphs of decency, are largely lost sight of. They are not sensational enough for the transatlantic cable."

"The situation is serious," he adds in another letter. "That being understood, I want it understood

that I am chuck full of fight. Drake and I are going to make the best magazine we ever made next year!"

He went energetically to work, spending most of this phenomenally hot summer in New York. My mother and the children remained in Europe until October. Her absence, combined with magazine worries and the serious condition of public affairs, made these months extremely wearing for him. There were, however, occasional breaks, necessary releases, from the broiling city streets. The following letters describe some of these vacations and touch upon the various interests that occupied his time.

To G. E. Woodberry

THE ALDINE CLUB, July 5, 1896.

Your welcome and welcoming note came, and I was glad to get it, for it's devilish blue one becomes in such circumstances as mine. I stuck in town on the 4th and Sunday, not for lack of invitations away, but for work's sake, and a feeling of aversion to an outing just now.

THE PLAYERS, July 30, 1896.

I am off this night to Boston, by the midnight train, to fish with G. C. and J. J. I expect, or hope, to go off on the yacht on the following Friday, coming home between Monday and Tuesday. When shall I see the light of your countenance?

I shall be glad to get away. Business is frightening


and people wonder where the country is going. The evils of autocracy are fearful; the evils of democracy can be cured only by an alert and intelligent and constant patriotism; the condition is largely psychological. The West has been put into a state of "suggestivity" by the demagogues. Who can dehypnotize it? I nearly killed a man in the street t'other day, who talked about killing Cleveland! It's a miracle they don't try it.

To H. G.

NEWPORT HARBOR, August 8, 1896.

I came up here last evening, arriving at 11 P.M. The Aldrich twins met me at the station and we came out to Mr. Pierce's yacht, where were Mr. Pierce, Mr. and Mrs. Aldrich, and Joe Jefferson. This morning we went out and saw the race, and are now back in the harbor. The *Hermione* is a steam yacht, larger than the *Oneida*. Last night there was a gorgeous illumination. It is an enormous relief getting away from New York. Wednesday and Thursday there were frightening for the heat. I think I have stayed too much in town and I now take longer weekly outings. Mr. Pierce and the Aldriches are very cordial and kind indeed. Your absence from the party is deplored. But we won't talk about absence at present.

I am glad Mrs. Lowell is to be near you. I wonder if her general sympathy for the poor, and those who think they have a grievance, makes her somewhat less



anxious about Bryanism? The very nice woman down at the College Settlement is cheerfully, laughingly, but truly for Bryan. Though she thinks he may be mistaken about silver! and silver is almost the most harmless part of the programme! for he, i.e. the platform, is against the suppression of riot, against Civil Service Reform, and against the safeguard of our system, the Supreme Court. Free silver would ruin us financially; but free riot, free spoils and free injustice would wipe us out as a nation. The men behind Bryan are the most unwise and unsafe in America.

CROW'S NEST, BUZZARDS BAY,
August 10, 1896.

On Friday night there was quite a jolly party on the Hermione, besides our own crowd: Benedict, Helen, and others. There was a most interesting colloquy between Benedict and Pierce — Benedict exposing the outrageous treatment of capital by Western legislation, Pierce acknowledging that, but explaining its occasion in the swindling operations of railroad magnates. The two sides of the medal were well displayed, but I liked the position of Pierce the better, as he could see and feel both sides. There was later some singing and story-telling, and the night ended in a three-cornered debate between Jefferson, Aldrich, and myself on the state of the nation. Aldrich did not do his patriotism justice, for he said out and out that he would rather be an Englishman. He is so

sensitive to our errors that he leaps to an impossible conclusion. Jefferson thought the situation extremely dangerous; neither of them saw any cohesion in the Republic. I think they are wrong there. (Pierce said next day that he lay in bed and heard us and liked my position best.) Jefferson says that the hatred of the West for the East is something much deeper than we have any idea of. It is partly the jealousy of failure for success. There has been a good deal of prosperity and mortgage-paying in the West, but there has been overproduction in some places of wheat, etc., with foreign competition, and in other places the climate is treacherous, and the region over-advertised.

The Hermione landed J. J. and me at Woods Hole too late for the train; so we drove up and spent the night here. Jefferson is now painting American waterfalls. The star combination of Bob Acres last year was an immense success. J. J.'s acting continues to be a bonanza — which speaks not badly for public taste.

September, 1896.

The President is remarkably well — and while not indifferent to the state of things is hopeful and unmorbid. He says that there is a sort of "epidemic of insanity" in the country, and this is one reason why he is so conservative about Cuba. Of course, he is stirred and grieved at the state of affairs.

I shall probably vote for McKinley without much trouble, as the emergency is so pressing that tens of

thousands of low-tariff people will openly vote for him — under protest. The third ticket movement is to hold away from Bryan some old moss-backers and give low-tariff, honest-money Democrats a platform. It will make the Democratic protest more patent to the world also, and will be useful in the future.

The third ticket and the Vermont election settled Bryan's hash. He turns out to be a sort of light-weight professional agitator — without balance or genuine ability. He will have a Waterloo. After all, when America gets well stirred up, things come out right. The patriotic feeling here reminds me of the early days of the war. I was on Broadway between Seventeenth and Twenty-third Streets when they put out at 5 o'clock a row of McKinley banners (or rather U.S. flags with McK. and Hobart on the fringe). A band played the "Star-Spangled Banner," as each one was flung to the breeze, and Republicans, good Democrats, and ex-rebs. all cheered together. I was with Procter, Brainerd, and Scott. Every nerve is now being strained to make the victory overwhelming.

Degree from Princeton

Princeton University was holding its Sesquicentennial Celebration this fall of 1896, and my father, with Saint-Gaudens and others, was to receive an honorary degree on that occasion. Writing to Professor West about the grave question of proper academic costume, he asked what he should do in this "unprecedented and

alarming situation!" Professor West answered by giving him the address of the gown-makers in Albany, and advising him to wear the Master of Arts hood which he had received from Harvard University. A few days later he wrote again to Professor West: —

October 10, 1896.

Mr. Saint-Gaudens says he has never been be-knighted before, and he wants to know if he must bring a gown, or what he must bring besides himself on the fatal day. I am struggling with your Albany friends, who seem to think that it is incongruous for me to have so many different kinds of things on; but I have quoted your letter and will make them follow it out.

This is a new world of terror, but I would not miss it for a dollar. The spirit of the adventurer is keen within me. I only wish that I could get into that costume a representation of another title. Can I not at least wear my Grand Army button? And I have a large silver medal, about the size of a saucer, presented to me by the Centennial Committee on Art which I might wear. Also, would it not be becoming to pin the Harvard and Dickinson Diplomas on the outside of the gown? But the only part of the garment which is not uniform in your schedule is the question of foot-gear.

Pardon this unnatural frivolity, but it is the penalty of putting an unacademic person in the academic uniform.

To which Professor West answered: "I have your letter of to-day stating that Mr. Saint-Gaudens is now in a condition bordering on terror in regard to the question of academic costume and that you desire permission to wear your Grand Army button, silver medal the size of a saucer, and two diplomas outside your gown. This, of course, would make a holy show of a most interesting character.

"So far as Mr. Saint-Gaudens is concerned, it is desirable that he should appear in academic doctoral gown. In case he is too late in making his arrangements, I may say that there will be appropriate caps and gowns on loan at Princeton for a moderate consideration and upon a strictly gold basis. This remark applies to your proposed silver medal. No Bryan medals are allowed in our ceremony for conferring degrees. I admit we have failed to prescribe the proper kind of shoes to be worn. The following will not 'go': russet shoes, canvas shoes, low-cut shoes, boots outside of trousers, and sandals. Tennis shoes and rubber boots may be worn only by special license, which will be granted at a moderate rate and also on a strictly gold basis."

To Rodman Gilder

October 25, 1896.

I don't know whether the reverberations of the Princeton 50th reached the scholarly precincts of Harvard or not, but it was a very imposing affair,

rendered not less so by your father's gorgeous costume, — Dickinson LL.D. gown, Harvard hood and Dr.'s cap! On the third great day I doffed the Harvard hood with its crimson lining, for a Princeton hood with an orange and black lining.

I tell you you would have been proud of Harvard if you could have seen and heard its President respond to the welcome on behalf of the American institutes of learning! The welcomer had been a little flowery and oratorical. In his rolling periods all the greatest men of ancient times seemed to have had their successors, if not equals, in Princeton. Then up rose Eliot, majestic, quiet, the personification of scholarly dignity, and in his rich and finely modulated tones read the reply. It was a Greek monument in comparison with a rococo one; it was better even than the Cambridge reply, for Europe and the rest of the world. The latter reply was well phrased, but had no form in the delivery.

To a friend

November 2, 1896.

You call me "Dr.," but you ought to remember that though I am now a Presbyterian L.H.D. I have been a Methodist Episcopal LL.D. for this many a long year. I have a Harvard A.M., but not as you thought a 250th anniversary A.M. But any degree from Harvard is a high distinction. The President's [Cleveland's] appearance at Princeton was the cul-

mination of the great celebration. We were all proud of him and grateful to him. We thought that Princeton itself made a fine show, and we thought that our oldest university in the person of President Eliot was an honor to the country. The celebration ended very pleasantly for us by Mrs. Cleveland coming home with us and spending the night at 55 Clinton Place. She returned to Washington the next day.

1897-1899

My mother had by this time returned from Europe. Her correspondence with Mrs. Foote, together with my father's letters, give some vivid details of their life during this period, and furnish, in part at least, the record of the ensuing four years. There is mention of my father's lectures and speeches, not only in New York but in other places as well; of his work as acting president of the City Club, his presence at the dedication of Grant's Tomb in New York, but a numberless other absorbing interests are not so much as touched upon. He was president of the Public Art League and was working hard in connection with the College Settlement. Together with Dr. Lyman Abbott and Whitelaw Reid, he drew up "an address and confidential letter" to the British people in response to demonstrations of friendship for us at the time of the Spanish War. My father was largely responsible for the wording of this address, and worked assiduously to obtain signatures to it. Throughout this whole


period, moreover, he was deeply engrossed in municipal affairs, which are not even mentioned in these first letters, as I have, for the sake of clearness, grouped the political letters near the end of the chapter.

In January, 1897, my mother writes to Mrs. Foote:

"All is going along here in its usual wintery way — teas and operas and 'things.' R. has gone twice to New Haven to lecture. This is a formal word for a very informal thing, a talk rather than a lecture. The first was about Tenement Houses, the second more ambitious, about the duties of the citizen and on Public Opinion. We are all pretty blue. The great god 'Public Opinion' which R. and other people seem so sure of, does not seem to me such a logical or honest voice, or we so seldom hear it that it is impossible to judge of its honesty. The speech was good and to the point, and he said it was well received. It was delivered before the 'Graduates Club,' and the men were mostly professors and so forth. The discussion afterwards was very lively.

January 13, 1897.

"I have had a visit from Cecilia Beaux, whose pictures made a real mark last spring at the Champs de Mars, where she was made *associée*! She is charming; and the evening passed off delightfully. Saint-Gaudens came — the first time in an age, and there was some admirable playing by Arthur Whitney of Boston. I



enjoyed it more than usual. New York is so big that people find it difficult to meet often. That is my idea in being at home week after week — that people shall meet often and have something in common. I sometimes think that is the reason that music does so much; it gives people some 'point de départ,' keeps them from floundering about before beginning a conversation.

March 28.

"I send you R.'s little pamphlet, which seems to me well worth saving. His new book 'For the Country' will come soon, too. You will find almost all your old acquaintances, but put together in a very pretty form, and giving one a feeling of his own love of his land.

"He is immensely active in municipal matters and has just been put on a 'Committee of Twenty' about which you will soon hear. Meanwhile the work of the office is more difficult than ever from the tremendous competition of the ten cent magazines. I do not see the need of all this heaped up work. I am not at all satisfied that it is right to be more burdened as you grow older rather than eased of cares, yet this seems mainly the case in our civilization where no one really counts until he is a person of business importance, and then he needs his strength for his business. The state of things is all wrong. At fifty a man should begin to have an easier life — thirty years of strenu-

ous effort ought to secure something more than merely living with some comfort and little luxury.

"R. scolds me a great deal for my pessimistic views, but one must view life as it seems. Being in contact with such an energetic optimist as R. W. G., I pretend to more of faith in 'Things turning out right!' than I really feel."

Here my father takes up the narrative, writing to H. G: —

March 4, 1897.

The "great prisoner" is released to-day from the White House; he must be a happy man, or at least a greatly relieved man. After he is dead he will be accepted almost universally as a type of civic virtue.

I wonder if we will be overworked in Heaven. I have just declined making a speech at the joint request of Miss Parsons and Miss Lucy F. — also another at the request of Brander Matthews's daughter — also another.

March 8, 1897.

I got to Boston Saturday afternoon, was taken by Mrs. Palmer to the reception, which was a jam, fired off my Greek Fire speech and shook hands with all New England, including the Aldriches, Mrs. Whitman, the Lucy Derbys, Mrs. Moulton, Mr. Dole, Mrs. King, etc.

March 10, 1897.

On Monday a lot of young Harvardians came in and cross-questioned me about tenements. At night I spoke to a fine audience on Tenements and Public Opinion, the first by special request. Pres. Eliot, William James, Peabody, etc., etc., and Mrs. Palmer turned out, and it really seemed to give them a surprising amount of satisfaction. Dear Helen Keller "heard" it! through her teacher. I "went slow" in some places so she could take it in. James came into the Palmers' afterward, and asked after you, as did every one.

To G. H. Palmer

NEW YORK, March 11, 1897.

I came on with the Aldriches and found the family all in good shape. The visit to the "Palmer House" already is historic in my mind, an experience as strange as it was delightful; your own and Mrs. Palmer's hospitality of the mind as well as of the heart, made me very happy, and this, with the contact with so many young, earnest, determined and hopeful souls remains with me as an inspiration and will remain always.

Those young fellows *need* to be on the alert lest universal suffrage mean universal vulgarity and corruption. It has an odd effect upon the mind, the view from an academical platform of Platt and Plattism followed by a return to New York to find the whole evil system in full swing: half-a-dozen men

without principle, not officials of the City, meeting informally and deciding to overthrow all that is good in our present local government, and with the power to do it through their venal and cringing agents, supposed to be the choice of the people as Legislators. Some of my friends feel as bitterly as did the Cretans, and say they would go to war to overcome such degrading domination. Were it possible to accomplish anything that way, I certainly would do so.

To H. G.

March 12, 1897.

To-night I made my last public appearance for the season, at the 76th Street East Side Settlement. I have declined everything else for this year! (It went very well.) My book is nearly visible, as a book, and will look very pretty. Your double wreath has come out very well.

To Mrs. Sarah B. Shaw

April 7, 1897.

I venture to send you my new book, "For the Country," knowing that you will care for the sentiment, if not the expression. I have not been willing to print the war poems together in one book until I had rounded out the thought inclusive of the patriotism of peace; and I hope you will like both ends of the book, and the middle as well, where I have tried to say something about Mr. Lowell, not sufficient, but from the heart.



To E. C. Stedman

April 30, 1897.

I recognized many faces on the way to the Dedication of the Grant Monument, but not yours! Being a member of the Reception Committee I was summoned at midnight to escort Mr. Cleveland. I had to rout him out of bed in the cold of the morning and tote him to the ceremonies! His totter had given out (in toto)! But though a cold, it was a pleasant duty and not without amusement. I wanted to sit opposite to him, but he said *no*. I was an official and must sit where I did.

I was not on any of the "formative" committees and had nothing to do with the shape of affairs (except the "shape" of the official programme). The committee on invitations included Hewitt, Porter, and Seth Low, and they seem to have confined their invitations to the Grants and officials. The æsthetic element was "not in it" unless you count the public schools of the city.

To a lady who asked for a receipt for an Authors' Cookbook

December 6, 1897.

I want you to know that I highly appreciate the compliment of the invitation. But do you know that if my name should appear as the author of a receipt in your book, it would discredit the whole work? — at least among my acquaintances. There is a theory, which I have never accepted, however, in its full force, that I do not know what I am eating, and that

I am incapable of cooking or producing a receipt for anything fit to be eaten by man, woman, or child. My family maintains that the other day through half the meal I applied sugar instead of salt to my Thanksgiving turkey, though in extenuation I remember thinking at the time that the receptacle for the salt was unusually large and the spoon all out of proportion. When I was a boy *uneatables* were left around so that I might come upon them by accident and inadvertently consume them.

By the way I do know how to make coffee and tea; do not tell anybody though; and I know one way *not* to cook beef. It is the way I cooked it one night in the army. The receipt at that time was to "kill the beef and cook it," but the killing and the cooking were so near together that the lump of beef I roasted with a stick in the camp fire comes back to my memory now with tragic significance.

To an inquiring acquaintance

December 9, 1897.

Mark Twain can be addressed, care of Messrs. Chatto & Windus, 111 St. Martin's Lane, London, W.C. I would say that a letter was addressed to him some time ago (before the people knew the Chatto & Windus address) "God Knows Where," and it found him. I tried the address "The Devil Knows Where," and this also reached him; so it seems that he is known at "both concerns."

To a friend

December 8, 1897.

As to joining another society, please have pity upon me. I belong to so many societies now, and through them have to get either on committees or write letters declining to be on them, to such an extent that my brain whirls and my work is interfered with. I am tired of seeing circulars from the societies I belong to, and the clubs, and I have sworn off. Anything but a society!

To another friend

December 8, 1897.

Don't you think that in these days when everything is organized and every cause, sentiment and notion has a society, there should be a society of those who have seen the Parthenon? The magnates of the society should be those who have seen it by moonlight. We could meet, pass resolutions, and get up subscriptions, and one important function would be to keep away from the Parthenon those who should never be permitted to see it at all; and then we might do a good deal of good by preventing the writing of verses on that subject. I feel something of a culprit in that line myself, but now that I am in the omnibus I should, of course, like to keep all newcomers out!

To Grover Cleveland

May 5, 1898.

I saw your speech about the war, and Goldwin Smith's reference to it. The final stages did not seem to me to be well managed at Washington (with a crippled cabinet and a dangerous Senate, how could they be?) but I try to content myself with the thought that the great mass of the people have gone into the war in a disinterested spirit, and with a pure intention, feeling that the "oppressor" must be smitten. I suppose the war of '61 could have been avoided, and this too; but when slavery and freedom clash, slavery is doomed, and this Spanish piece of Medievalism in the new world was doomed too. Taking it as the people intend it, it is a righteous war and should advance civilization, and now if we can be quick about finishing it, so much the better.

I wonder if, with all our holding back, the Fates are to make us play a large part in the world's affairs. Perhaps by that way are to come a freer commerce, and a higher grade of administration and legislation generally for America. Even with peace our troubles will be but fairly beginning; all our virtues will be tested; all our statesmanship and good citizenship. I wrote to my oldest boy to-day that never was there a time when every man should bestir himself with more assiduity in the task of purifying public opinion and the machines of government.

To G. E. Woodberry

June 14, 1898.

We find we cannot wait for a declaration of peace after the war to take it up, without taking a back seat, so we are in it with all flags flying — "Battles and Leaders." Of course we have got to wait for the *leaders*, but we are following those up pretty closely. Battles and leaders — problems and places; and I am afraid the problems will be more fearful than the battles, and may be more deadly than the places.

I am very sorry that your friend was not able to stick to Roosevelt's Rough Riders; but look at me! I want to go and can't. I was too young for the other war, but managed to get into it, and am too old for this, but may be in it yet if they will only keep it up long enough. My nephew is on the "Yankee" and must have seen fighting. I envy him with all my heart. "War is hell"; perhaps that is the reason it is "the greatest thing on earth." It is n't the killing but the sacrifice of war that makes it enticing after all.

With regard to the war, what I am anxious about now is that so many Congressmen, having placed their families advantageously, will be a real element of difficulty in settling peace. When you have a lot of conscienceless spoilsmen to preserve the honor of your country, what can you expect in the way of genuine statesmanship? I think that the President wishes to do right, and we must all stand by him in the final settlement.

To H. G.

August, 1898.

Jean, Joe, and I in a little room at the Martin heard the whole thrilling story of the Merrimac from Hobson's lips this evening! with a diagram that he drew on the spot.

To "Aunt Sarah" Lytle

1898-99.

I wonder if it is as grippy in Vineland as it is here. I've not been really ill, but I have been a good deal grippy. Some years ago I made the important discovery that we had all landed by accident on an uninhabitable planet. The only thing is to get off and find a better.

Rodman and I saw and heard Hobson the other night; his mother sat quietly in a box taking in the whole inspiring scene. The boy is a handsome, tall fellow, with a modest but commanding voice and bearing. His address was in excellent taste, as well as most thrilling in its descriptions, and lofty in spirit. The country that easily produces such boys is never to be despaired of.

I have been thinking often of father recently. Would it not be a good arrangement if God could let those we have loved come back for just a little visit — say once a year? Now I would like to have a day with father: have him see the children, go through the office, and see how things are going on, — and then — vanish, if he must, for another year.

Very many thanks for the old war letter from father. How it brings back those anxious days. To think of mother's life all those years. Do you think the wickedness of war will ever be felt by people who call themselves Christians in a way to make them stop it? The news from South Africa is sickening. "Glory" is a painted prostitute, posing as a saint of the Lord.

It was in March of this year, 1899, that my father was acting as president of the City Club.

"My election to the Board of Trustees and as First Vice-President was a great surprise," he wrote, "and when informed of it by Colonel Waring in an appealing letter, I answered that I would try it and see if it were an ornamental position or one meaning work.

"Now, as you know, the tragedy of Colonel Waring's death, and the crisis in the affairs of the club, have meant a most unexpected amount of work, and work which, with everything else that I have, I hardly ought to be called upon to perform. I feel that this same tragedy of the Colonel's death may, however, entail the further duty, if the club demands it, of continuing on the board for another year, but I wish to be relieved of the position of First Vice-President."

To a friend

March 31, 1899.

The club was recently under a treble burden: first, the death of Colonel Waring; second, its financial

condition; third, the confusion in the public mind, of certain of its members with the actual conduct of its political affairs.

As First Vice-President I have had to step into the gap for a while, but we shall soon have a President who will not be myself. Again the financial affairs of the club on the side of its physical life as a club, have been placed lately on an excellent foundation. There has been a great increase in the membership, and the club is now going into a fine large house on Thirty-fourth Street at a lower rent and without the heritage of debts. The political council has got to work in excellent shape.

To H. G.

November 6, 1899.

I went out to Princeton Saturday afternoon. The President¹ had asked me to come, and he met me, and we had some very interesting talks. The publishers also wanted me to go out to see Woodrow Wilson, so I killed two (2) birds (♡) with one (1) stone.

I want to tell you what I have done to-day.

— Up at 6.30, train, in charge of F. F. C. to 23d Street.

— At court — long waiting.

— At Bureau of Municipal Statistics, examine their work.

¹ Mr. Cleveland, whom my father always spoke of as "the President" even when he was not in office.

— Visit, with the Commissioner, Mayor Van Wyck (who greets me as an old acquaintance of the Cleveland Campaign! — don't remember meeting him), whom I urge to do something for the Bureau by appointing a good man on the Board!

— At house.

— At office — work, conference, and oysters.

— Back at court at 2 P.M., where called on jury.

— Go to hat store to buy a skull cap, on account of drafts in court room.

— Visit Bowles' Old Curiosity Shop looking for something.

— At office again — conference and other business.

— Go up town and important conference with Dr. van Dyke engaging a lot of material for magazine.

— Visit City Club — subscribe to political emergency fund.

— Downtown and have hair cut.

— Dinner, at which the Proctors call. Long talk about Dewey with whom he came from Washington and whom he rescued, with his "intended," by accident to-day at Vantine's, where they had taken refuge from the crowd.

— Now the processions have gone by, C. B. and Dorothea have gone to bed and I write this.

— To-morrow's elections will be pregnant with various sorts of prophecy. Things are decidedly mixed, in most cases a choice of evils. I fear Tammany will wipe us out here in New York.

— 10.10 P.M. In walks F. F. C., after missing her train and many adventures, and half famished. Dorothea comes down and does the hostess.

Citizens' Union Campaign

The movement which culminated in 1897 in the nomination of Mr. Seth Low to be Mayor of New York had its origin as early as the spring of 1894. Writing to Mr. J. W. Harper in April of that year, my father says: —

"I dropped in at your house the other evening to see when you would be in town, because we hope soon to have a report from the sculptor and architect in the Curtis Memorial matter.

"I also wished to have a friendly consultation with you over the suggestion of the nomination of Seth Low as Mayor. I don't know that it is yet time to be sure of such a move, and yet the best opinion is so strongly tending in that direction that I thought possibly you might be willing to talk the matter over. I am not acquainted with his own views on the subject, but I suppose that in any event he would not act without the approval of the Trustees of Columbia College. I very strongly hope that if it finally seems that his candidacy would settle all doubtful points, and be an assured release of the city from the tyranny of misrule, that both he and all of you of the Board would feel that it was a call that could not be neglected.

"Surely, such a call would have to be very distinct, not only in the minds of others, but in the minds of both Mr. Low and the Trustees of the College, because his present position is one of such enormous utility. At the same time the College might not be injured by the loan of his services for so great a cause. Supported as he would be in office, and with his experience and prestige, he could accomplish for a republican form of government possibly as much as a President of the United States under similar circumstances."

In 1897 the Citizens' Union was formed and against his own "strong protest" my father was placed on the Executive Committee. He was also made Chairman of the Committee on Press and Literature, which distributed over two thousand documents in the course of the campaign. These pamphlets, circulars and cards, dealing with such subjects as Small Parks, Clean Streets, Public Economy, the Merit System, and Civil Service, were printed in four different languages. They were prepared with the utmost care, for this campaign was largely one of public information and instruction. It was possible, therefore, to take the defeat of Mr. Low at the polls in November in a philosophic spirit. The educational side of the movement, at least, had not been without results, as was shown by the large vote polled by the candidate and by his election to the mayoralty four years later.

To a friend

May, 1897.

I am perhaps a bit too sensitive lest the ridicule attaching to a literary man's interest in public affairs in this country should injure any cause into the service of which I am drafted. For this reason I earnestly begged to be excused from any *active* participation in the Citizens' Union, but was urged by the leaders to remain for the simple reason that they seemed to have difficulty in finding men known to have done something that the masses of the people (or rather their leaders) felt to be in their interest.

I remember Beecher saying that people blamed him for joking so much in the pulpit! He answered that they did not give him credit for the number of jokes he did not get off! So people don't know how many things one has to refuse to do. My rule is to do nothing that is not a clear call of duty, and to do nothing that interferes with my magazine work, which after all is, I hope, my principal usefulness. It is only one's pleasures that one has a right to interfere with, not one's "regular work."

To Seth Low

May 27, 1897.

It gave me much pleasure to hear, last night confidentially, that you are at least willing to consider the acceptance of the possible nomination for the Mayoralty by the Citizens' Union.

When I returned temporarily to America, in the fall of '95, I found my Good Government friends carrying on their movement, rightly as to principle, but perhaps somewhat inopportunately as to time. At any rate I followed the Committee of Fifty rather than my other friends. But at that time I spoke to some of the leading men about making the next committee broader and more representative. On coming home last year I found that a broader movement was in contemplation, but I had nothing to do with its makeup, and came in only just before the announcement of the names was made. I was afterwards placed upon the Executive Committee, and have been in fact in daily attendance at headquarters, as I was made the Chairman of the Press and Literature Committee.

Observing the thing now from the inside, it seems to me to have been very wisely conducted up to date, and in a pure and noble spirit. You cannot but be one of the first to recognize that the situation is different from any in our day. The movement to keep the enormous new city from slipping into a condition of degradation, is not only a matter of tremendous importance in itself, but occurring as it does at a time of reaction against so many good things throughout the United States, — occurring at a time when people are more disgusted than ever with the low character of national political manipulators and bosses, and when there is a general disappointment at the result of our institutions in the production of a Senate which is a

menace to good government, — occurring at this time, it has bearings which might affect the whole course of our national history. It seems as if the election of such a man as yourself (and the election, not by combinations with discredited organizations, but by the uprising of the whole people), will be a gain for the cause of good government throughout the country. At such a time even to lead a forlorn hope would be an honorable distinction, and, ultimately a beneficent action. But what you are asked to do is far from this. The hope would not be “forlorn” with you at the head of the movement, and throwing into it that devotion, even recklessness in regard to personal consequences, that your friends and admirers have found in your career. There are those who think, indeed, that the reaction from the low estate into which our political management has fallen is to come through the interest of the inhabitants of cities in the local government.

It is perhaps presumption for anyone to ask another to undertake the ungrateful task of leader of a great campaign, but so many circumstances point to one man as the leader in this case, that it is rather a selection of Fate than individual choice.

I have written this at my own motion, and hope you will not think it impertinent.

Through July and August the suspense as to Mr. Low's acceptance of the nomination continued.

Finally at the end of August, my father wrote to Mr. James B. Reynolds: —

"I have not had the opportunity to tell you that Low sent for me on Friday, and we had a talk of an hour and a quarter in which I was able to unburden my mind very freely and along lines of which I am sure you will approve.

"It seems to me that he is ready to come all the way with us. Of course, if this delay were kept up much longer, what we might gain in Brooklyn we would lose in New York, but if he comes out strongly we can make up for the present suspicion and growing disaffection."

A few days later he wrote jubilantly to another friend: —

"Your telegram of good news reached me before word came to me from headquarters. I went up there and found the U.S. flag already given to the breeze. I had telephoned for a six-foot portrait already, and with Pine and Reynolds' consent it was put over the door! Now for some real fun! The work will go on with renewed enthusiasm. We've got now both a cause and a man. Thank God!"

To G. E. Woodberry

September 16, 1897.

I do not know whether the separation of national from state politics is *permanently* feasible, but I do know that, as things are, it seems, at least, our only

hope of escape from disaster. By throwing aside national politics, the city has several times been given better government. Neither party organization here seems to be inclined to work in the interests of the city, but rather for the machine of each party, looking upon the government of the city as so much "spoils," and preferring that its supposed enemy should be in power, rather than have in power some decent government which it could not "run." I suppose you have seen that — said he would prefer "Tammany" to a "Citizens'" candidate; and, as a matter of fact, Platt and Croker can always get accommodation from each other.


I think I shall bother you with a pamphlet which we have gotten out, which goes over the case historically and shows that the action of the Union is entirely in line with the new Constitution. If the movement is wrong, then the Constitutional Convention was wrong when they said they "sought to separate in the large cities municipal elections from state and national elections." I think if you will run over this campaign book you will see how the city has been treated by the machines of the two parties.

Now, as to the representative quality of the Citizens' Union. What interests me about it is that it is really a means of a more genuine representation than now exists under the "boss" system. As you have noticed, the Union has used in a way the referendum system. The fact is that primaries, run by the bosses,

are *not* representative and the people do *not* govern through this means, but *are* governed. The great interest in this is that it is a people's movement, though, technically, it is easy to say that it is not. The appeal is to the people; to the people who are now stirred up, the plain people, the working people; their hearts are in the right place.

There are some thirty or more of working men on the large committee of three hundred — the most representative committee ever formed in this city. Altogether, it is the popular aspect of the matter which seems to me so extraordinary and interesting. The nomination of Low is really a popular movement, and not a pumped-up thing by a set of "purists."

This has been a "campaign of education." It began really last winter, with lectures, etc., but it has been going on during the summer. The whole question of municipal government has been explained to the people, and they are awakening to a true and intelligent interest in it. This is now being done through indoor meetings, outdoor meetings, educational lectures, with magic lantern illustrations — going through all the various departments, explaining what has been done, here and abroad — and a series of pamphlets and cards, with illustrations and without, of which I have charge personally. These are on the public schools, the streets, tenement houses, the care of the poor, etc. There has never been such a political campaign in the history of the city. If nothing else



comes from it but the education of the people, and the lifting of their thoughts away from personalities into questions of constructive government, even with this alone, immense good has already been done.

Now, as regards the question of fusion as against the Citizens' Union plan of campaign; you remember that, in 1894, by "fusion" we elected Strong; and in 1895, we lost the city through "fusion" by twenty thousand majority. The principal leaders in these two movements of fusion concluded that this year, with a natural Democratic majority in Greater New York of from fifty to seventy-five thousand, fusion will not work, because too strong a stamp of Republicanism upon a municipal ticket would probably swamp it.

It is really a greater cause than it seems on the surface. This political corruption, and the drifting of the greatest offices into the power of unscrupulous and corrupt bosses in the various states, may be affected by a popular movement of this kind. All over the country it is being watched with the greatest interest, and, where conditions are favorable, with imitation.

Whether we shall win or not I do not know. I have never concerned myself much about that, being willing to go along with the best crowd I know of, and, with much anxiety, pain, and trouble, contribute what little I can to the betterment of public affairs. I am sustained in this work by the thought that *somebody* must hold up ideals; if not, things get to be more and


more selfish, sink to a lower and lower plane. The crowd in this movement, the working men, professional men, business men, seems to me about as good a crowd as there is in this city. They are not, perhaps, perfect, and may fail at times in judgment, but we must use the best means we have, and fight together for the best things in sight. Acquiescence is degeneration and degradation.

To a friend, after the defeat of Low

November 5, 1897.

Our people intend to keep up the fight. A party that can poll over one hundred and fifty thousand votes in one community has got to be reckoned with. The corruption in the management of both the principal parties is something appalling!

As to Henry George, we all warmed up to him in the present campaign, as he got to be more and more outspoken and plucky in his attack on the principal evil, the evil of corrupt boss rule. George was not a socialist, neither was he a silver man. He had many notions with which I did not agree, but he was in favor, on principle, of free trade and of a system of land taxation which might, or might not, be a great improvement on the present system. He was extreme in his views about the latter and thought it was a panacea; but he was a good and honest man and died, as it turned out, in the cause of civic purity, fighting and dying in the battle for political freedom, and



there was a very warm feeling in his behalf. He was not fighting the Citizens' Union movement really, and the larger vote he had the more likely we should have been to win.

To Dr. Dewhurst

November 8, 1897.

The other day I sent you a speech of mine in the last campaign. I did not speak very much, because I was very busy in the work of the Bureau of Press and Literature of which I was chairman. We have not altogether failed, because we have some good men in the Legislature, and because we have secured so large a vote on so high a platform. We feel that it is a great calamity to slip back into the hands of so ignoble a band of plunderers as Tammany affords; but we are going to keep up the fight all through our lives, and our children are being trained to the same work. Universal suffrage, as I have often said, must mean universal politics, for there are too many thieves and vagabonds voting! At one of our headquarters the other day a man came in and tried to sell sixty Italian votes for \$30. When we have venal and corrupting corporations, and venal voters such as we have in New York, it becomes those who believe in civilization to think deeply and act wisely and with effect.

The Farm and Europe again

"I am he who for his sins was banished to Paradise," wrote my father in December, 1899, from his farm in the Berkshires, where he had gone for a few days of much-needed rest. This New England farm which he had bought several years before, was a source of great pleasure and refreshment to him.

"We first came to Tyringham in 1893," he explained, "staying at 'Riverside.' After that, till we bought Four Brooks Farm, we boarded in Tyringham every summer that we were in the country. We got into the house in 1898, and 1899 was our first full summer with guests at Four Brooks, — Mr. Cleveland being our first guest."

To Henry van Dyke

Tyringham is in a state of Nature. It is bounded on the north by fountains that never fail, great clouds of laurel, hills of rock and the Great Bear; on the south by Willow Glen, Tyringham River, the Ghosts of Sister Anne and her fellow Shakers, the ponderous shadows of Fernside Forest, and the high horizon line of the Shaker Hills; on the east by the Purple Dawn, and on the west by a hundred summer sunsets. It lies in light between a golden evening of Friday seen from the cars that shoot up the valley of the Housatonic, and the pale regret of City-looking Monday morning. You approach it through the stirrings and sweet

hopes of springtime and leave it when the trumpets of Autumn echo down the bannered valley.

The above answers your question in a practical way. If you want the poetry of the place you will probably get out at Lee, Massachusetts, and drive to Mr. Moore's farm at Tyringham, eastward some five miles.

I think you ask the road — it is the Housatonic, which takes you to Great Barrington, Stockbridge, Lee, Lenox. It is near all these, and in sight of the mountain range made of the memories of Thoreau, Hawthorne, Bryant, Holmes, and Longfellow.

To Thomas Shields Clarke

June 18, 1902.

The only prose record of the farm is in my famous account book and in the little book where I hope you will often write your name and which contains some, what I may call pleasing details — like an account of my last preachment to the farm animals. They have to listen to a sermon at least once a year in order to keep their manners and morals in proper trim. As for the poetic record of Tyringham and Four Brooks, the author blushes and points hesitatingly to his various volumes of verse.

To G. E. Woodberry

FOUR BROOKS FARM, January 26, 1900.

This is the third time I have been up here this winter. I have been taking large doses of that Homeric tonic, Walter Scott. I have had a dose, too, of



THE HOUSE AT FOUR BROOKS FARM, TYRINGHAM

the old English dramatists and am now reading — Cæsar! Here's a "course of reading" for you! Some other classics are at hand — books I have never read, or have read long ago. Then I work on the farm, to-day with my good right arm did I not destroy fifty (50) young pine trees that were stealing grass from the cows in our big pasture? On the kitchen hearth at this moment you may see a lamb untimely born, in the cold blizzard, at 5 P.M. to-day, being fed on a bottle with brandied milk. The "absent-minded" little "beggar" has a bleat like a toy lamb — but its instinctive power of suction is all its own. It is named Jean de Reszke for its notable voice.

In spite of the pleasure he derived from these excursions to the farm, and in spite of the slight improvement in his health, he was in no condition to resume regular office work. A proposition which included both business and pleasure, and which would take him abroad for a few months, was therefore promptly accepted. In February he and my mother sailed for what proved to be his last European voyage.

Before starting he wrote to John Hay, then Secretary of State: —

January 22, 1900.

I understand that you have always on hand passports in verse adapted to the use of poets, so called. As I am expecting to go abroad, with my wife, on the 10th of February I thought I would apply for one of

your poetic forms. I can supply you with any number of (negative) proofs that I am a composer of poetry, though it would be easier to furnish proof that the Secretary to whom I apply is himself a poet, *de race*. I can also furnish you with a personal description which, if not provided for in the forms, you, with your well-known ability, can easily work up: —

Eyes — Like a tropical night.

Mouth — Becoming size.

Nose — Languishing.

Cheek — Somewhat above medium.

Legs — Like Douglas's, "Long enough to reach the ground."

To tell the truth, it is so long since I was passported I don't know the ropes, so perhaps you will kindly request a satrap to inform me.

To "Aunt Sarah" Lyttle, on his return from Europe

NEW YORK, July 15, 1900.

When I arrived in the port of New York it was in fear and trembling of the Custom-House, which has new rules, and informs home-coming travellers, with admirable politeness, that the state prison yawns for them. I gave the watch-dog of the Treasury my name, with its initials. "What," he said, "Richard Watson Gilder?" Whereat my pride rose — ah, here I am an individual, and not a "tourist." "Yes, I am that same R. W. G." "Then you are the son of Chaplain Gilder, and you buried our General (Egan). I was a

member of his regiment. I am honored to take your declaration." Whereupon I declared I had brought so and so. "That's nothing," says he, "it is a courtesy due you!" He would listen to nothing; got another officer and rushed me through. So my dear father met me at the end of the journey, welcoming me home! I have a notion that St. Peter, when I knock at his gate, may forgive my transgressions for the sake of the name I bear.

CHAPTER X

POEMS AND ADDRESSES

1901-1906

IN spite of the warning of his recent illness, and in spite of a serious breakdown in 1904, the five years between 1901 and 1906 were as full of new undertakings and energetic pursuit of old interests as any period in my father's life. His heart was enlisted in so many causes that he felt himself in danger of being "over-organized." "There is hardly a sentiment which I possess or a hope I entertain which does not subject me to some sort of organized work," he exclaimed in answer to one of the innumerable demands upon him. "This makes life in the metropolis a rather uphill affair, especially when one has to devote a great deal of time and energy to necessary patriotic exertion." Nevertheless he managed to give his name and his services to countless efforts for civic betterment, and to carry on at the same time his editorial and literary work. The letters that follow reflect another side of his life as well, his amusements and his occasional holiday expeditions. With all his cares and responsibilities, harassing as they were, he never lost his buoyancy of spirit, or failed to carry with him wherever he went a breath of fun and laughter.

Inscriptions for Pan-American Exposition

During the winter of 1901 he was engaged in writing the inscriptions for the buildings of the Pan-American Exposition, then under construction at Buffalo.

"I never expected to have to do them myself," he explained to one of the directors of the Fair, "but you and Fate have been my leaders into a new form of literary expression which I have very much enjoyed, and besides it has been an opportunity for patriotic preaching which I sincerely appreciate."

To President Eliot of Harvard

May 30, 1901.

Some time ago I wrote to you asking you to write the inscriptions for the Buffalo Exposition. I had accepted the commission (a "free will" commission, of course) on condition that I might ask you, in the name of the authorities, to do the work! Your secretary wrote that you were out of the country and that he could not break into your vacation by even forwarding my letter. Being thrown upon my own resources I went at it — and enclose the result. "I did n't go for to do it," — but I did the best I could: I hope you will be lenient! I enjoyed, i.e., I endured and profited by the criticisms of a dictionary friend and I trust there are at least no technical errors. But it is absurd for any one else to try to write inscriptions while you are about — but you were not about!

In addition to these I selected nine quotations for the Ethnological Building.

To W. I. Buchanan

March 1, 1901.

I had hoped to send you to-day in triumph the eight inscriptions for the eight large panels of the Bridge Pylons, but at the last moment I find that Messrs. Carrère and Hastings had sent me the wrong layout! So I have been working for weeks on a false basis! Instead of 160 letters each, word came to me to-day that I could have but 43, or at a stretch, 60. I have just been to see my friends the architects, and they have explained the mistake; some discarded plans were sent to me and their young man afterward gave me the wrong figures!

I think the architects should have their own way about the size of the lettering, so I shall endeavor to make some short inscriptions. But I told them I hoped they could use somewhere the eight I intended for those panels. I left a copy with them and I send a copy to you. You will see what I have aimed at, namely to glorify the things and the men that have made the new world what it is at its best. All I can say is, that they have had immense care in the preparation, and have been carefully analyzed and edited by competent scholars here; as well as by other men and women of taste. I hope the result will be to your liking.

March 7, 1901.

I have a new scheme now for the bridges, which I shall be able to report on soon, but I am glad to know that you can use the eight inscriptions which you are so kind as to like. Mr. Carrère wrote that, being "impressed" with them, he had sent them on to Buffalo and hoped a place would be found for them.

March 8, 1901.

I think I will have all the inscriptions put into print for private use very soon. My friends are so pleased with them, (and I am the editor who tells young writers not to be misled by private praise!) and you are so appreciative, that I think I will include the inscriptions in my next volume of poems, as Mr. Eliot included his in his volume of essays.

March 11, 1901.

Now, as to your suggestion of giving out those inscriptions to the public, please understand that my "humble exertions" are entirely at your disposal. Nothing but patriotism could have wrung from me this labor, so busy am I in my proper work. Having done it, it is in every way a free gift, to be used just as you think would be most advantageous to the Exposition. If you think the inscriptions should be given out before the Exposition opens, you must act entirely on your judgment.

Personally I would have been glad if people came

upon these inscriptions at first as an anonymous surprise. They might then even think they were better than they are. If they are put forth previous to their actual appearance on the buildings (especially if there should be any compliment attached to them), there would be, I fear, a critical reaction. They would be looked upon as literary matters, submitted, so to speak, to the newspapers and public, for criticism, and there might be some very unpleasant things said, as I certainly have not gone through life in such a way as to omit the wholesome making of enemies. However, the whole matter is in your hands. I want you to feel that you are entirely free to put them out as you suggest. I shall not mind the criticism myself, if there is any, and if you do not mind it, who cares? I only present this consideration. Do not hesitate to carry out your plans if you think it would be of the slightest advantage to your enterprise.

P.S. I draw a deep breath of relief. I think the work is about over, but if anything else turns up where you want my help, please let me know.

To H. G. from the home of some friends in Buffalo

May, 1901.

This house is far out of town and so near the exposition grounds that we walk over there. The first view of the exposition was from here in the twilight after the buildings had been illuminated; it was something exquisite — different from the Chicago and

Paris effects, and extremely surprising and beautiful. On Wednesday they are to have the Indians here in the Log Cabin Studio next to our main house, as a surprise for the Roosevelts. They will be sitting around the fire chanting when the company goes into the studio after dinner. I am going to have Dorothea stay and see it. We dined with President Milburn and his wife and Mr. and Mrs. Buchanan and Mr. and Mrs. Glenny on the grounds last night.

The appreciation of the inscriptions is really phenomenal. How seldom do I hear as much about the poems into which my secret heart is poured. I wrote last night a poem about the name I have given the show, "The City of Light." It is to go into David Gray's catalogue.

May 21, 1901.

Dorothea saw the day fireworks (yesterday) while some of us were listening to Roosevelt quoting the inscriptions! He based his speech on them and kept making eyes at me where I sat with Mrs. Glenny and his sister and wife. He would come over to our side of the desk and hurl an inscription right at us. Everyone makes a great fuss over the inscriptions, though only the ones on the Pylons are in place. Buchanan said they were, so far, the best result of the exposition. I never had so much taffy. They made me speak Sunday night at the dinner given the St. Louis Exposition people, who came *en masse* — seventy-three in the party.

My father was not in Buffalo at the time of President McKinley's assassination, but, like every one in the country, he was deeply moved and shocked by the tragedy. A friend who had been in constant attendance on the President during his visits to the fair grounds wrote to my father: "I remember distinctly on two occasions when we were driving about the grounds, the President called my attention to the inscriptions, reading some of them as we passed along. He was deeply impressed by them and knew that we owed them to you. He read some of them aloud on his last ride to the Temple of Music as we passed along the Liberal Arts Building."

On the day of the funeral, my father wrote to a friend: —

September 19, 1901.

What a strange day! This morning Rodman and I were at the Church of the Ascension. This afternoon, at the time of silence, we were singing "Nearer, My God, to Thee" with the crowd in front of Trinity.

In the President's great speech he quoted, I was delighted to find, from my poem on the "City of Light." In the speech of Vice-President Roosevelt, in opening the Exposition, he quoted from six or seven of my inscriptions on the buildings. The other night I wrote a poem about the President and the trees, "The Comfort of the Trees," which I hope you will like. What a noble ending he made.

*Roosevelt in the White House**To a friend*

September 30, 1901.

I have had a very exciting week in Washington — three long talks and various meals with the new President — that child of fate and old friend of mine. I have not been in Washington for nearly five years. And now walking through the family rooms there with Mrs. Roosevelt, I felt and said that I might well welcome her there to that dear familiar home of mine. She took me into her room and it was our old room! Though, indeed, I have slept at various times in nearly all the bedrooms there. This particular one was Lincoln's, I think.

Notwithstanding the horror of the recent event, I cannot but look forward to the new administration with exhilaration. One night I talked with Roosevelt for nearly five hours — the second day of his life in the White House. He rings true! He is a noble fellow. He has an excess of temperament, but a serviceable conscience as well.

He is very different in his temperament from Cleveland, but has, like him, the moral side of his nature in a remarkable state of development considering that he is a politician. To think that Cleveland is the only living man elected to the Presidency. Roosevelt told me that Cleveland had said the kindest things to him that had been said by anyone. The meeting between

the two at the funeral at Washington was very touching (they are old acquaintances). But I must not gossip lest I let state secrets dribble out.

While in Washington I passed the Harwood Navy Yard residence. This gave me feelings, for I can never get over missing that dear, dear Miss Bessy. If there is a heaven and I can get there, it will not take me long to find the Harwood house. Their house was always heaven to me.

My exciting and intensely interesting visit to Washington ended with the death of my old friend John G. Nicolay, Lincoln's private secretary. I had to go to the grave with the poor girl who is all that is left of the family. I wrote a poem about him the day we buried him. She liked the poem — and *he* had liked the roses I sent just before he died. To think of his living just to the death of the third murdered President, — and they did not tell him McKinley had died.

Returning to New York he wrote to Mr. Seth Low, then on the eve of his successful campaign for the Mayoralty:

October 3, 1901.

Though in touch with what was going on, I was in Washington when you were actually nominated. May I tell you how much pleased I am that, judging from the papers, you have been able to throw already so much energy into the work. I am sure you will make a most effective campaign, and the prospects of win-

ning this time are a thousand times better than in the old battle summer, and yet I am glad to feel that the work done then has not been altogether thrown away, notwithstanding our disappointment.

To District Attorney Jerome, elected on the Low ticket

November 6, 1901.

My joy is almost too deep for "hurrahs"! I stayed up till after two this morning to be sure beyond peradventure that *you* were in, and well in. Your troubles are really just beginning — but I am confident that you will overcome them; for if ever a man was, you are committed and dedicated to principle, and principle in success or defeat is always and ever essential and eternal victory.

I am sending you a little book of Lincoln's words, with a foreword by your admirer and friend the undersigned. You struck the Lincoln note in this campaign and it will reverberate through all your future career. My warm regards and solemn congratulations to your wife, as well as yourself.

Yale Degree

To a friend

September 30, 1901.

In the week of October 21st we go to be at Yale, where youths by the name of Theodore Roosevelt, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, R——d W——n G——r, and others are to be the recipients of leather medals for being nice little boys.

To Grover Cleveland

October 26, 1901.

I wish to congratulate Princeton through you on your accession to a trusteeship there. You may also pass along the compliment to them of Yale having seconded Princeton's motion in regard to making me a doctor. I believe I am now a triple doctor and qualified to feel the literary pulse of any applying patient.

To John Hay, Secretary of State

October 26, 1901.

It was interesting to me and very delightful to see that the two monosyllables, John Hay, were all that were needed in the announcement at Yale the other day.

I am sending you herewith the "Thumb-Nail" collection of passages from the speeches and letters of Lincoln. Mr. Benjamin E. Smith, of our Dictionary department, made the collection, and your diffident friend the introduction. This is how it happened: When your and Nicolay's book of the complete writings of Lincoln was running through the press I had to make a talk a few times and used to take those sheets along and read from them, and talk between. This got to be finally a sort of lecture. The company hearing of this got me to boil it down as a preface. There is perhaps one idea in it not hackneyed, and that is a musical idea. If you ever have time to look through the preface this theory may amuse you — the theory of the *Leitmotif*.

To Dr. Jane E. Robbins

April 3, 1901.

You may put my name down on the large advisory council of the Society for Italian Immigrants, although my bargain was that after the first push I was to be excused. I am trying to simplify my life and not tie it up in hard knots in every direction. I don't believe you people believe much in me as a poet, or you would leave me a little time to do what Mr. Stedman calls "sing." Never mind, you will be sorry one of these days when I am in the cold, cold ground and can't "sing" at all, even with a cracked voice.

To J. B. Bishop

August 15, 1901.

It is a real privilege to come into contact with a man like Governor Taft. I should like to see such a man in the executive chair at Washington.

Princeton Inauguration

*To H. G., from Princeton at the time of the Inauguration of
Woodrow Wilson as President of the University*

October 28, 1902.

I got here in time for dinner Friday. The Cleverlands were to dine with President Wilson and I with the Armours. At the Armours' dinner were also President Harper (of Chicago), Colonel Harvey and Harry Harper of Harpers, Young Blair, etc. Robert Lincoln, who was dining with the Wilsons, came in

later just before I left and I was very glad to meet him again.

Saturday morning the great event went off prosperously; my friends in the procession were Stedman and Clemens, besides others in the academic department of the march. The ceremony aside, the interest yesterday was in the three addresses: of the outgoing President of Princeton, ex-president Cleveland's address in behalf of the Trustees, and Woodrow Wilson's address. All were first class; Patton's graceful, brilliant, with a touch of humor in excellent feeling and taste; Cleveland's broad and statesmanlike and showing how admirably he has felt his way from the outside into the heart of academic affairs. In this regard it was something of a surprise to me. To think that a few years ago, that is since he was first elected President, he felt himself so much a stranger in the academical world that he would not accept a doctor's degree from Harvard, while now he not only accepts degrees, but confers them; and takes his place as working trustee in a great university. Several of the Trustees tell me that he is highly intelligent, effective and useful in his capacity as a Trustee. One said that at a meeting last Tuesday he took a leading part, the young men getting in line behind him and backing him up.

"The great event" of the visit was the dinner at Hutton's — Mark Twain, Speaker Reed, Cleveland.

To a friend

NEW YORK, January 18, 1903.

I went to a lunch to-day to the Ambassadors' and wives' at W. Reid's, Carnegie on my right, Morgan opposite, etc., etc. As I got back to the house there was a commotion on the second floor, and the divine Duse was just going. She stayed a while to chat. It seems H. had been translating for her a little impromptu I had written at the play, about our being so much to her when she was less known — she was

“Loving and lonely
Ours, and ours only”

and she would be ours again when again lonely. She wrote on the page, “*Elle est plus seule que jamais! E. D.*” Touching, *n'est ce pas?*

I thought I had had an interesting day, and now I am going to spend a part of the Sabbath arranging a little book all about one called Christ for a “Christmas Wreath,” for next Christmas.

This is New York, and one reason that we put up with the chaos and clamor is for the sake of the human play.

To-morrow another “typical” New York day. In the morning sit for C. B. Afternoon a rush of work at the office, later, Tenement House conference and at night a public dinner to Colonel Church. And I have two poems and an address on “Ideals” on hand — so run away, I must work.

P.S. I opened the envelope to do justice to this day,

so long as I had begun to make a record of it. In the afternoon, in comes, among others, an artist from the Arctic and Antarctic both; a young architect and his fiancée and a young lawyer. After dinner in comes Jean and Jeannette and Julia Marlowe and her niece. A great talk about the stage, authors, plays, Duse's tremendously interesting advice to her, etc., etc., — a world of ideas. In between I have found time to write a poem that Duse said I should write, and so it goes.

February 9, 1903.

We had a great two days in Washington. I had three meetings with the President: the last got me up before breakfast — an hour and a half of the "President at the Breakfast Table!" Too much excitement — and I have been gouty ever since. But 't was immense fun. Yes, we settled all things foreign and domestic and what was left over we have settled since; long letter from him to-day, very "intense."

I had an interesting talk in Washington with another potentate, Morgan namely, and I am to see him again in the matter of writing about labor unions and capital. To-morrow night we dine with Carnegie. The other night with the present manager of the steel combine. These things amuse you, so I prattle on. These Presidents and Potentates are interesting. So is Miss Marlowe, who dined with us last night at my birthday dinner.

To Lyman Abbott

October 22, 1902.

I am a "Roosevelt man" as you know; with a full understanding that now and again he will do something of which I heartily disapprove. This is no reason for utterly condemning him. But the standard must be kept up. No one more anxiously wishes it to be kept up than Roosevelt. He is, by the way, greatly strengthening the classified service.

Addresses and Poems

My father gave a number of addresses during the winter of 1903. In January he spoke on "Tenement House Reform"; in March he addressed the Brown-ing Society of Philadelphia on Emerson; in April he discussed the subject of "Literature and Diplomacy" before the Authors' Club of New York; in June he gave the Commencement Address at Wellesley on the subject of "Ideals of Life," and in the same month read his poem on John Wesley at Wesleyan University, on the 200th anniversary of the birth of the founder of Methodism. Finally, in July, he spoke on kindergartens before the National Educational Association, which held its annual meeting in Boston that summer.

The delivery of these speeches and addresses necessitated a number of hurried trips away from New York. In the spring, however, he went on a more protracted tour, attending, with my mother, one of

Robert C. Ogden's Southern Educational Conferences. In company with other Northerners who were particularly interested in the problems of the South and in the manner in which these problems were being met, they visited various universities and schools, and saw many delightful people, old friends as well as new. In April a meeting was held in Richmond in memory of Dr. J. L. M. Curry, "the father of the educational movement in the Southern States." At this memorial service the hymn beginning "God of the Strong, God of the Weak," written by my father for the occasion, was sung by the whole assembly. He used to speak often of the strange and moving effect of hearing his own words, written only the day before, chanted by the entire great gathering. It was the same emotion which he had felt on hearing his hymn on the dedication of the Obelisk sung, some twenty years before, and which he was again to experience when Bishop Potter read his lines on Abram S. Hewitt at the funeral of that "great citizen" and former Mayor of New York. Bishop Potter prefaced his reading with these words: "It is not the usage of this Church to accompany the Service for the Burial of the Dead with words of eulogy, whether for prince or peasant, but some lines came to me this morning from one whose name, if I were to mention it, you would all recognize as that of a man of rare intelligence and discrimination, and I shall venture to read them."

A few days later my father wrote: —

January 25, 1903.

MY DEAR BISHOP: —

I saw that in Friday's "Post" a correspondent criticized you for reading those lines. My, my, am I to be the occasion, am I to be the unwitting cause of your losing, in the language of labor, your ecclesiastical "job"? Well, I think Mrs. Potter would welcome the day of your becoming the Bishop-Statesman Emeritus, though I fear no one else in the community, not even "A. H. S.," would take kindly to the proposition.

Seriously, my dear Bishop, it was a deep pleasure to me that you thought those impromptu lines worthy of such solemn association. Your reading of them added to whatever appropriateness they had, as I told Mrs. Potter.

I thought that you might like to know that I have never in my life had so quick and general recognition of any words of mine. I tell you this, not in pride, but in justification of your own action. Letters and messages have come to me daily since the funeral from those present, and not present, including the family of Mr. Hewitt, — also Mr. Stedman, Mr. Charles Stuart Smith, Mayor Low, Mrs. Lowell. The Mayor writes, "You have done a public service by your lines to Mr. Hewitt. They are both beautiful and just. Thank you."

Since writing them I have carefully revised them, adding, or rather inserting, a few lines to round out his image somewhat.

*John Wesley**To Professor Winchester of Wesleyan University*

May 25, 1903.

Last winter, while my portrait [by Cecilia Beaux] was being painted and I had some hours for reflection, one line rang itself into my brain for the Wesley, followed by half a dozen others. I knew then that the poem was born, but the young creature yet had some delicate months before it, and I thought best to say nothing to you. Well, a week ago I went up to our mountain farm, Four Brooks, and the "Lord was good to me," in the language of the class meeting! And again he was good yesterday, at my birthplace and my mother's down in Bordentown. Poems with me are sheer miracles — though to others mine may be nothing but bores. As it is, I am just palpitating with this, and it seems very expressive and moving. But to-morrow it will seem inadequate, poor, abortive. It is about one hundred and fifteen lines of blank verse. Read my lines about Mrs. Palmer in a recent "Century" and you will know the manner of it. It will take eight to ten minutes to read, hardly more than eight. But there are parts of it will go hard for me to read aloud, Lord love me! How can I school myself to read the part about my father, disciple of Wesley, and not break down — and break down I *must* not, I *must* not.

It is being typewritten, and it is, I suppose, a fixed

fact and you can count on it, and on me to read it, if I live and am well. I don't know whether to send it to you in lonely confidence or not. I would rather you should not see it, but then again I would like the benefit of your reading it to see if there are errors that could be so presented to my mind as to convince it; errors of fact or judgment, infelicities. I am easily convinced of my errors, as a matter of fact, and would be grateful for your friendly advice, and you owe it to me for getting me to do it.

I think on the whole it would be much better for me to follow you. My blank verse will doubtless have on many a highly soporific effect, and it would be a pity to have you wake up the audience after I had started them off to the land of nod.

To H. G.

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY,
MIDDLETOWN, CONN., June 30, 1903.

I got in before dinner last night, and the same evening "appeared" before an immense crowd, wherein the friendly face of Miss Smith¹ was a comfort. Miss Smith dined with us last night. To-day Professor Winchester took President Remsen of Johns Hopkins and me and one other a long and beautiful ride. Then a lunch "toasted" by Stephen Olin (very well) at which Eliot and others spoke. To-night I dine with Professor Armstrong (son of Scribner, Armstrong &

¹ Dean of Wells College.

Co.) to meet Dr. van Dyke and Miss Smith, then hear Woodrow Wilson. Wednesday I get my degree, lunch with Eliot, and others, and go back to New York. Winchester's address was truly literary and delightful. Dr. Kelley introduced me in a way to make a modest man humble.

13 EAST 8TH STREET, June 3, 1903.

How many years ago this night was I at work getting ready our home at 103. I wish I were with you now, but we must have our celebration next Sunday. I wonder how many men can say that after so many years they can imagine even, no other life. Without you it seems to me I not only could have had no *me* worth while, — I would have been nothing of value at all — if "value" I have at all.

July 10, 1903.

Well, the Kindergarten speech was speeched and all went merrily. I got to Boston at 11 and had a good night at the hotel. Miss F. came for me in a carriage and I got off my screed to a not too large audience in a tremendous hall. I put in a good deal of talk, condensed in delivery somewhat. I had a letter of approval from Eliot, to whom I sent a copy of the address. I had lunch at the Vendome, after which I went to re-see the library (where Sargent's things look better and better) and then to the Museum, personally conducted by Robinson himself. The Higginson is

there, the most important picture painted by Sargent in America, and a ripper, a big canvas with all Sargent's best characterization and brilliancy. Everyone likes it, it seems, but Higginson himself, and Mrs. Higginson. Sargent painted eighteen canvases in fifteen weeks, besides at least four drawings! The Higginson brings up the exhibition. I wish you could see the show.

I got in a pile of work in New York to make the magazine more popular — my, what a struggle for an audience! All life is strife and I am having my "business" strife at t'other end of my life. Well, I'm full of fight yet, and the great things being well, should not complain.

To a friend

May 26, 1903.

Every once in a while I break down; that is, I have done so several times in my life. I am then laid off for an uncomfortable while. I cannot afford to do it again until I am ready to take passage for the Other Shore. A large part of my work has to be done at night; that is, mere routine work, reading manuscripts, etc. I have also a certain amount of writing to do, of an imaginative character, supposedly, and some of it purely public, addresses, etc. I have already been filling up with committee meetings to such an extent that it is again necessary to begin to unload. I must ask you and my other good friends to save my

poor brain from routine work, leaving it free to do the things it can do best, which it cannot do at all when oppressed by committee work.

Illness and Trip to Florida

His efforts to prevent another breakdown were not, however, highly successful. The strain continued all summer, with the inevitable consequence of a serious illness, beginning in September and lasting for almost a year. Writing to Helen Keller in January, 1904, he says: —

"I have n't been at my office for over four months, except in short visits, being kept at home by a sort of rheumatism, now called myositis, inflammation of the cells of the muscles.

"But I have not had a bad time at home, especially when I received your last book. I have had the pleasure of writing about that and about your other book and the Laura Bridgman book and I send you an editorial which I hope you will like, you and your beloved teacher.

"I am going to send you a Christmas book of mine, which I hope you will find Christian in the broad sense, in a sense indeed, that is not dependent upon the obfuscations of theology. Perhaps I should not speak disrespectfully of theology — for I suppose it has its uses, like the equator and other respectables.

"If you are in town perhaps you will come and see the *povero stroppiato*."

To a friend

Sometimes I have a game of dominoes with my wife — and faithful nurse — at six o'clock A.M., by the light of a lamp. I was awake this morning at four and ready for hot milk and a game of solitaire at six. I like solitaire, for no adversary is humiliated and I am sick of all forms of human pain, misery and disappointment. At the same time I would not mind "wiping the flure" with you in a game of dominoes.

To G. E. Woodberry

January 8, 1904.

I want you to know that I have had many thoughts of you in the New Year season. Night after night I have been re-reading your poems with ever new delight. That was a corking good sonnet to you in the "Post," one night, by the way. A young man spoke to me on the train lately, one of your boys. He had seen you at your home and said you were a mite of a bit pessimistic about public things just then. What bothers me is the system of business competition as applied to the literary world. It irks me more and more as I grow grayer and approach the jumping-off place. Why should I have to take my neighbor's pie on the way to his lips, or he snatch my peach; why should I have to be a party to putting money values on intellectual and soul outcomes? It is an infernal grind, and I hate it. These things make one pessimistic, — and to think I can't get enough together, at

present rates of interest, to feed and educate my family without keeping up this outrageous strife. (It is n't all bad though.)

I am letting my brother Joe, literary agent, place some of my poems outside of the "Century"; a new experience for me, but it may help to take off the curse of printing "my own poems in my own magazine" (which, in fact, I never do nowadays except for an "occasion" of some sort, or anonymously) and the other curse of "writing too little."

In truth I am almost always writing, but as the poems do not appear in the periodicals and as people do not as a rule buy the books in which they are printed, naturally they go on saying, "Why don't you write?" "He writes too seldom," etc. I have a good plenty for an eighth book, larger than usual, but I will not print it for some time; meantime see the "Atlantic," "Scribner's," "Collier's," "Independent," "Critic," etc. I've half a notion to run a poem every few days for a couple of months, besides, in some daily. It is a curious thing that people seem to think more of contemporary verse printed in newspapers than if printed anywhere else. The effect is magic. I have always found it so, perhaps it is the contrast. They are not looking for it. A bright Westerner named Foley is writing comic and serious verse, some very good indeed, in the "Times," and my neighbor Mark Twain stamps up and down his room like an ocelot and declares that he, Twain, knows

nothing about literature but that Foley writes up to Shakespeare! Let's start a daily to be published once a week, and to have fresh poetry mixed with the dispatches, communications and news screamers.

Your poetry about the Spanish War comes nearer justifying that shaky adventure of ours than almost anything else. W. told me that it would have been possible to get the Spanish out of Cuba without firing a gun, had not Congress insisted otherwise. The Spanish had to go, but *curse them who needlessly make war!* — Meantime, hurrah for the brainy, plucky little Japs.

I have your book by my side; it makes me realize the world's ingratitude for its best gifts. Gossipers go up and down and ask, "Where are the poets?" with such a book accessible; and if you mention it, it is like mentioning some strange exotic.


Did you know I had n't been at my desk since the beginning of September, though doing work now at home. A case of tiresome myositis makes a cripple of me for the time being, not forever the doctor says.

In spite of the doctor's encouragement the illness dragged on to a discouraging length, resisting all treatments and remedies. Finally my father was ordered south, to try a change of climate and environment. My mother and I accompanied him, settling for several months in a little cottage in West Palm Beach, Florida. The improvement in my father's

condition was neither so prompt nor so complete as had been hoped. "We have been in Florida since the 17th of February," my mother wrote to a friend on March 27, "and though it is impossible to ask for more perfect atmospheric conditions and we are out of doors all day and could be all night, yet this persistent nerve affection still keeps dinging away, and no work and no play makes us both dull boys. R. is wonderfully cheerful and never complains except when a movement brings the bad points to his notice, but finds something of interest in all that goes on. We are in a little cottage belonging to Joseph Jefferson. He himself lives near one of the big hotels which make up Palm Beach proper. We stayed there for a week when we first came down. The whole place is a garden; everywhere oleander trees blooming all the year, all kinds of palms and palmettos, all sorts of fruit, guava, oranges, grapefruit, cocoa palms, pineapples. But R. is so little better! I am deeply disappointed. But I now hope that returning home will show what these months of rest have done."

Summer of 1904

In May we turned northward again, stopping on the way home at Savannah, Charleston, Richmond, and Washington. When we arrived in New York, my father was somewhat improved in health, but still far from well. The summer that followed was troubled, not only by his own illness, but by business worries



as well, and by the misfortunes of certain of his friends. In July he had an acute and frightening attack of appendicitis, from which, however, he recovered with comparative speed. "I was almost mobbed at the club the other day," wrote an anxious friend to my father; "'You *said* Gilder was well again!' half a dozen men called out — including some merely scientific persons, — 'and now the "Evening Post" says that he has appendicitis!' I assured them that it was merely the beginning of a course of campaign lies, and that Hearst had probably bought the 'Evening Post' in order to improve the morals of the upper classes. So later the telegram set the matter right. Let me tell you that you are loved, even by scientists!"

"Sudden it was," my father himself explained: "three o'clock in the morning — and divilish it was, but in twenty-four hours, in the language of the poet, 'it had went' — with only the natural remains, which keep me, tho' chirpy, in bed."

To G. E. Woodberry

FOUR BROOKS FARM, August 4, 1904.

MY DEAR { WANDERER
 { "ROAMER"


I'm glad you're home safe and well, but so sorry England did not solace you more. Have you ever been to the Lake Region? I envy you your freedom, yet if I could always be up here, as this summer, work would not be so irksome.

My appendicitis scared my friends more than it did me, perhaps because I was so well taken care of. Dr. McBurney came over from Stockbridge to see if an operation was necessary, but there has been no return yet. I am as well as, if not better than before. I call myself a brand snatched from the McBurneying.

The summer has been so far terrific on Mrs. Gilder, piles of family guests, my illnesses, Mark Twain's sad family next door, — George, admitted to Harvard with three credits and no conditions, rides across the state on his pony and is thrown out of his wagon the next day, without injury!

Mark, in our cottage next door, is most grim and unhappy, but full of life and abounding in scorn of a mismanaged universe. Imagine Rabelais and Voltaire rolled into one discoursing, in the lantern light mixed with moonbeams, of a fiendish and ingenious Providence, while the gentle optimist Mrs. Rice (creator of the most popular fictional optimist of our day) shakes her head painedly at his astounding grimaces at God.

Are n't you poetizing a bit? I am — occasionally; and now and then I hear, from roundabout ways, appreciations, not literary but human, which make me wonder at the power of words, even when they seem ineffectual to ourselves, to carry our thought into distant and unexpected places. That must be the immortality the poets crave.



To R. L. Clarke

FOUR BROOKS FARM, July 3, 1904.

I was ill when your letter came last September, and have been ill almost ever since, though now greatly improved in health. I could not accept the nomination about which you wrote me, for Alderman, but I appreciate your most kind letter.

I have at different times, in emergencies, given much effort and much time to public affairs, as you know, but even if well, I could hardly, in justice to my editorial engagements, take such an office as that of alderman. I would not hesitate at the added work, but it would not be quite honest to my associates.

To an anti-vivisectionist

Evidently I am a wicked vivisectionist, though I did n't know it. Well, well, if there is abuse somewhere the abuse should be stopped. When I am sure of my ground I can apply my knife remorselessly — to Trinity Church and other good landlords — to the Metropolitan Museum and its conscienceless and variously lying director, etc., but I am horribly sensitive also to being unjust. It is a great and wide subject, this of cruelty. How easy it would be for a peace advocate to make the gentle Lincoln a monster of injustice! He assisted at the vivisection of myriads of his fellow men. He did not think of administering any form of anæsthesia to any of the men he killed or maimed. To save the Union, not even, he said, to free the slaves he destroyed thousands of human lives. *Ecrasez l'infâmel*

To Hamilton W. Mabie

September 5, 1904.

Your letter was like your visit, both have been bright spots in a darkened summer, a summer in which we have had not only many matters of physical dangers, but in which I have been under great strain of friendship; something I may be able to tell you about sometime, an unexpected sort of disappointment, which I am trying my best to see the other side of, even if I may not soon forget. (Nothing to do with next door, by the by, nor anything very intimate.) So you see your friendly, though too short visit, was a better deed than you imagined.

We talked somewhat of the constitution of the universe the other day. If it had not been "forth-putting" I should have been glad when we got home to put my finger on certain pages of mine where I have from time to time said what I felt on these matters, at times of stress or of remembrance, and to ask you to say, how does this ring? I could n't do it at close quarters, but now that you are out of sight, I am emboldened to ask you in some moment of leisure, to glance at "Non Sine Dolore" and at the last pages of "The Poet's Fame" and "Art and Life" just preceding "Mors Triumphalis." But on looking over my books I find so many things in this field of thought that I can hardly ask you to bother about it. For instance, the last few lines of "In Palestine," my sixth volume, where the thought is expressed in a way that

is nearer my meaning than (almost) anywhere else; and in "The New Day," "The Sower," and several following poems. But the more I look the more surprised I am to see the thought, or allied thoughts, cropping out all through "The New Day," and, I believe, in all my books; and I have no doubt if I had any of your books up here I would have much the same experience with them!

Rodman is here for three days or so and we are glad to have our "five" home and well. To-day all are at work getting pears; trimming rose-bushes of dead wood; gathering stones from Battle Brook for pavement; to-night or to-morrow night a bonfire on the mountain with corn cooking in the coals.

October 31, 1904.

I am now going backwards and forwards, spending Sundays here. During the past few weeks I have had the happiness to write a number of poems which my little home and friendly audience seem to *over* value. At least it has done me some good.

To Miss M. H. Lansdale

NEW YORK, November 25, 1904.

H. has just received an invitation to sit in the Carnegie box to-morrow at Carnegie Hall with Mrs. Carnegie and Mr. Morley. The other day I dined with the said Morley at President¹ Butler's; also

¹ President of Columbia University.

lunched with him to-day at ex-Mayor Low's; also lunched *him* at The Players Wednesday; also go out to meet him at Whitelaw Reid's Sunday; also spent yesterday afternoon with him, having taken Booker Washington to be catechized by him at Carnegie's; also went upstairs to Carnegie's sick-room to be thanked (feelingly) by A. C. for presiding at *his* dinner to his guest Morley on Tuesday night, where were five college presidents and I don't know how many ambassadors, poets, novelists, and sich. At which select banquet I had provided each guest with a stunning quotation from the Right Honorable, — which bowled the Right Honorable over, — and served as a text for every eloquent speech; while the poor unhappy host was lying upstairs cussing his luck, groaning with his pernickity back, and missing, in his own house, the yearly event he most cares for, and one of the greatest private dinners ever given in New York.

'T was Saturday night that I was on the committee of reception to Wagner (Pastor) and just before on the committee of reception to Mrs. Roosevelt and others at the Exhibition — and now on Wednesday Mrs. Cleveland is lunching with us to see the same show; and to-night C. B. spends with us.

I mention these things to show that I am "Richard himself again" and all the better for my Sunday rest at White Oak. Bless you all.

: (Catalogue price for autograph letter, \$7.75!)

P.S. I must tell you a joke. I have known the

Right Honorable for years. Got him to write his "Cromwell," etc.; so the other day we were walking in the street and I happened to mention my four university doctorates coupled with my total freedom from collegiate training and general ignorance! "But what," said he in sudden, pained curiosity, "did they give you these degrees for?"

I stopped, threw up my hands in despair and cried out, "God knows!"

(Including P.S. \$8.47.)

P.P.S. The other day my friend J. B. Bishop and Morley were visiting President Roosevelt just after the election. After hours of voluble expression, untiring, prodigious — the President left them. They wandered through the red, green, blue and East rooms, when Morley turned on Bishop and said, "I have been chiefly impressed in this country by two things, Niagara Falls and the President of the United States" — later he added — "both natural products."

(Including P.P.S. \$9.37½.)

To a friend

June 5, 1905.

Honorary A.M. Harvard; LL.D. Dickinson; L.H. D. Princeton and Yale; LL.D. Wesleyan; President Public Art League of the United States; mem. Council National Civil Service Reform League; mem. National Institute Arts and Letters; mem. American

Institute Social Service; Trustee New York Kindergarten Association; mem. Committee of Fifty (on liquor question).

I dare say I am various other things that I cannot remember, but if you can state on positive evidence that I am a poet, I would rather that than all the rest put together.

To Miss Charlotte Porter

March 28, 1905.

Our publishers told me lately that they wished to put the "Portuguese Sonnets" into one of their little Thumb-Nail books, but that it was not bulky enough! Looking into the matter, and supposing at first that nothing could be put with them, I suggested that a unique and delightful book could be made of the Browning love-antiphone. First the 44 "Sonnets from the Portuguese" followed by the six lyrics that belong with them; then R. B.'s "One Word More," "O Lyric Love," and "Prospice," with an introduction telling briefly the story of these poems, quoting other references of each to the other in verse, and printing in the introduction, and not with the acknowledged and open addresses to his wife, the "My Star" lyric. I have written the introduction, and the book will soon be published.



Dedication of Albright Art Gallery

Several years before this my father had been asked by his friends in Buffalo to write a poem for the dedication of the Albright Art Gallery. He answered at first that he could not do it.

"Two or three times in my life, I have, by some sort of miracle, been able to have ready for an occasion some not un-appropriate verses, but I have never promised to do so. In this case, I felt, behind the invitation, your deep interest in the event. I remembered our talk about the building and its opening, and felt your kind partiality for the poet; and at the same time I felt that the vagueness of the subject, the fact that in my Phi Beta Kappa Ode I had treated of Beauty and Art already, and the fact that an acceptance would probably end in failure and disappointment, I felt that these considerations made it altogether best for me to decline at once, and to give time for the selection of a poet whose processes were more certain, and for such purposes more satisfactory.

"If it were only a matter of taking trouble, how gladly would I enter into the scheme! But verse making with me is all accident and surprise — it is no 'trouble' at all, in a sense, when the impulse takes possession — and the 'impulse' always comes shyly, unexpectedly. Any other way with me would result in something lifeless and perfunctory, something that would disappoint you and be unworthy of the occasion."

However, during the two years that elapsed between the planning of the gallery and its completion, the inspiration for the poem came. "The Temple of Art" was written by the 31st of May, 1905, on which day he read it at the opening of Albright Art Gallery. The occasion was one of those happy holidays which my father so much enjoyed. Writing to my sister on his way to New York after several days of merry-making in Buffalo he exclaims: —

"What a good time we all had! Already it is taking its place in memory as a dream of pleasure — a dream with many rooms!

"The journey went off according to programme. I left Mrs. Cleveland at Aurora at 7 P.M. Friday, and arrived at Ithaca at about 8, spending the evening with President Schurman, at Cornell, which he showed me in the starlight. I was quite bowled over by my starlight experience. Cornell is a magnificent place on a great hill, or mountain-side — immense, majestic, great courts, campaniles, enormous ranges of buildings, large embowering trees, terraces on terraces, waterfalls — something undreamed of by me."

Winter of 1905-1906

To Robert Erskine Ely

November, 1905.

For the last thirty-one years I have been in the fight for free art, a fight part of the time successful, and I believe destined to become permanently successful, for there are no rational arguments against

it. The only pleas put forth in favor of the tariff on art are, first, it is for the protection of the home artist, and second, that it is a tax on the luxuries of the rich.

As for the first contention, the protected artist is the one who cries loudest for the lifting of the tariff.

As to the second contention, in any sane and statesmanlike view of the matter it would be better, though I do not believe in subsidies, a thousand times better to subsidize the capitalist who brings art into the country than to fine him for doing that which is a conspicuous benefit to the country, or to prevent him from doing it altogether.

Think of it! Some of the older and more experienced governments do all they can to obstruct the exportation of the art riches of their people, while our new land, which of all countries is most lacking in examples of the best art, does everything it can through its government to prevent importation of works of art! Such a condition of things is disastrous to our art and outgrowing art industries; it is unintelligent, it is inexcusable, it is idiotic.

It looks as if our Congress had been a little crazy on this subject. But there are signs of returning sanity. The present situation is unendurable, and the brighter and wiser men in our national legislature I believe will soon respond to the cry of warning sent up by the culture and intelligence of the country, and will induce their ill-informed or denser legislative associates to vote on this great and pressing question.

To T. Wayland Vaughan

December 26, 1906.

I took up actively the movement for free art here in 1880, after talking in Paris with the American artists. On coming back then to this country I went into the agitation pretty strongly and drew up the act which was introduced into the lower House of Representatives by Mr. Perry Belmont. I also worked through the Free Art League, being one of the founders. Mr. Beckwith was President at one time and Mr. Kenyon Cox was, I think, the secretary. We got free art through, you remember, finally, but it was knocked out later, especially through the efforts of Mr. Tom Donaldson of Philadelphia, now deceased.

The National Society of Fine Arts is evidently doing good and I wish it all success. Of course you know about the movement in which Mr. Glen Brown was prominent. I was a sort of figure-head in an association, called the Public Art League of the United States, for the purpose of getting a law through for an art commission.

To a Louisville friend

December 31, 1905.

I miss Procter very much and I miss Jefferson. Such losses seem to make my world appreciably smaller. I am a great one to cling to old friends.

Speaking of Kentucky reminds me strangely (! !)
of whiskey, which reminds me that we have not yet

consumed all yours, while meantime our genial friend, the Laird of Skibo, has taken to supplying us with a royal tap in unconsumable quantities! Do you know that aside from his ponderous donations he abounds in little attentions like this to his acquaintances?

I met our friend Grover Cleveland the other day. He is cheerful over his Equitable work, feeling that he is thereby still of some use in the world. To think that Bryan will have an article in the "Century"! Since Hearst's infamous arrival with his pot of money to buy a Presidency, Bryan looms a conservative and highly respectable figure.

A Trip to Canada with Carnegie

To H. G.

THE BISHOP'S HOUSE, GAMBIER, OHIO, April 26, 1906.

All goes well, restfully and interestingly. Already I feel well repaid for the effort of coming away from my work. A. C. improves instead of diminishes on closer acquaintance. Such stories from him and McCook of Lincoln and Stanton!

A. C.'s address was remarkably brilliant and vital this morning, on Stanton whom he knew; after which we had a reception at the Bishop's and then lunch with the ladies, and speeches. A. C. again was brilliant. Col. McCook presided — called me out, and I was made the subject of the glee club song.

They have all been appreciative of my going and I am enjoying it all extremely, and learning many important and interesting things.

April 28, 1906.

Yesterday we had a busy day in Toronto. The grand event was a dinner at 6 o'clock where we all spoke, A. C. making a remarkable address. I got along, I believe, very well. This morning we are off for Ottawa.

I can't tell you how I am enjoying this. Not only seeing new places, but the talks with our own party. It is, indeed, a liberal education. A. C. is truly a "great" man, i.e., a man of enormous faculty and a great imagination. I don't remember any friend who has such a range of poetical quotation, unless it is Stedman. (Not so much *range* as numerous quotations from Shakespeare, Burns, Byron, etc.) His views are truly large and prophetic. And, unless I am mistaken, he has a genuine ethical character. He is not perfect, but he is most interesting and remarkable; a true democrat; his benevolent actions having a root in principle and character. He is not accidentally the intimate friend of such high natures as Arnold and Morley.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, OTTAWA, April 30, 1906.

We got into Ottawa yesterday afternoon and the whole party came at once to "Rideau Hall." Behold us being ushered through the red-coats and lackeys

into this strange palace of royalty, the only "royal" household in the New World; right into a cup of tea, so to speak, with Earl Grey's daughter, Lady Sybil, a charming young lady, who presides in the absence of her mother in England.

A. C. is really a tremendous personality — dramatic, wilful, generous, whimsical, at times almost cruel in pressing his own conviction upon others, and then again tender, affectionate, emotional, always imaginative, unusual and wide-visioned in his views. He is well worth Boswellizing, but I am urging him to be "his own Boswell."

He has greatly grown since I first knew him. As he himself said, his life is now so much more worth while than if he had kept on making money. "I would n't have known you and Butler!" "I have changed my views" — I should think so! I remember how he attacked any one who said a good word for higher education, and now he has done more for it from the point of view of moneyed contributions, than any other man who ever lived. He is inconsistent in many ways, but with a passion for lofty views; the brotherhood of man, peace among nations, religious purity — I mean the purification of religion from gross superstition — the substitution for a Westminster Catechism God, of a Righteous, a Just God.

I have hardly begun to tell you about the interesting men I have met. What a great trip it has been! I am so glad you were in favor of my coming.

*The Fire Divine**To President Schurman of Cornell*

April 3, 1906.

I have been thinking over our talk and the whole subject of the possibly brief address by myself, appropriate to the dedication of Goldwin Smith Hall in June. I have an idea and a scheme! On the evening of your visit it occurred to me that I had in my portfolio an unpublished poem which might fall into the plan of a brief address. The poem is entitled "The Divine Fire," and that would be the subject of the address, which I at once briefly sketched on paper and in my mind. It would be a sort of prose poem, ending in verse, the idea being that this building which you say is to be dedicated to the humanities would be really dedicated to the divinities, and that all its energies would be concentrated upon the effort to keep alive in the minds and hearts of men the fire divine. Now, you may think this entirely too vague for your purpose; and after writing the address I myself may find it too much of a rhapsody, which would leave me only with the poem, which again might be too short of itself for an occasion of so much size.

Will you let me have your frank impression? If you look at the book you will find that the occasional poems in it are as purely poems as the shorter lyrics; in fact Mr. Stedman generously complimented me

on having in the Buffalo ode written a formal and occasional poem lyrically. This was because the whole thing was alive in my mind with lyricism and beauty and I had a year or two to mull the matter over in my imagination.

To Cecilia Beaux

June 16, 1906.

To-morrow I go to Cornell to spout on a subject you may think too vague for an academical occasion. The Divine Fire, begorra! A rhapsody it is, ending in a poem.

"You'll be pleased to know" that I've been roped into sitting for the City Club to Wilhelm Funk. It's a summer picture; white suit, flannel shirt, cane, short French cloak, which differentiates it from *the* picture. It looks like a good, swinging, decorative thing — so far as done.

But what good times I had standing on one leg in South Washington Square! Do you remember those days, my hearty?

Did you know that I read the proofs last night of my new book—called *A Book of Music*. Thirty poems on musical subjects for which Mrs. Glenny has designed the cover.

*Summer of 1906**To a settlement worker*

August 21, 1906.

You ask me about the young man. Such things are terrible and hard to face. He would seem to belong to that class of original thinkers who in order to prove that they would have made excellent husbands kill the intended (and objecting) father-in-law, then the girl, then themselves.

Well, the world is stocked with people who mistake pleasure for happiness. It is hard for me to understand a nature craven enough to be willing to put up in this life with anything but the best, the most noble, the absolutely perfect, the spiritually highest. A person who says, I am content with the shadows of things, the shams, the less fine, the impure, is like one who should say: I do not like clean bread and meat; give me swill. Every man is inescapably the guardian of his soul. That is his first duty in the world, to keep that soul of his clean. If he betrays his trust he is not only a cowardly deserter, but he cannot escape by this default from injuring other souls, either through occasioning grief, or by contamination.

Aside from ethics there is such a thing as moral taste. A man should be ten thousand times more ashamed of betraying bad moral taste than of showing bad taste in the esthetic field. If a man blushes at

being caught in some banal opinion about art, how scarlet he should turn at any suspicion of having a false opinion as to morals. — Tennyson's line: Self-reverence, self-knowledge and self-control. Any one who calmly cuts himself off from these is a moral leper distributing evils so far as he touches other souls, and this continually, with effects eternal.

To help others is the highest blessing and happiness of life — to hurt others its greatest curse.

To F. W. Whitridge

October 18, 1906.

If you want to know the stuff that is in that "Tenth Street Poet," you had better try to get tickets to his play "The Great Divide." The joke of this consists in the fact that you will have great difficulty in getting them unless for several weeks ahead. This is not to boom the play because it is the most successful new play on the boards, but merely to hurrah for this obscure and unknown neighbor of yours who has taken the town with a vengeance. I refer to William Vaughn Moody, author of three books of poems and the play "The Great Divide." At Weber and Fields they are caricaturing it under the name of "The Great Decide."

P.S. For the Lord's sake, read my letter in to-day's "New York Times" — and vote for Hughes — two or three times over!

Hearst Letter

The letter which my father so feelingly adjures Mr. Whitridge to read was a long, carefully considered, and impassioned arraignment of William Randolph Hearst, who in that year of grace was running for the governorship of New York State. Immediately upon the publication of this letter in the "New York Times" for October 18, my father became a storm centre in this strenuous campaign. The "Journal," Hearst's newspaper, could find no better way of answering his "vigorous, logical, and convincing" letter than by ridiculing his personal appearance and flinging at him such school-boy epithets as "tender apple-blossom," "Quivering mouse," "fluffy incubator chick." It was a feeble method of rejoinder and did far more harm to the owner and the editor of the "Journal" than to the man they attacked. No sooner did this editorial appear than the "World" published a letter from Jacob Riis in which he called attention to my father's public services, especially his service to the people of the tenement house districts. Riis's letter was reprinted in many newspapers and circulated widely as a sort of campaign document. My father's letter was used in the same way, not only in New York but in other parts of the country as well.

Writing to Mr. Morley on October 18, 1906, the day the letter was first published in the "Times," my father said: —

"You were so much interested in our affairs over here that I thought I would send you my letter in to-day's 'New York Times.' The situation here is most extraordinary. A young scapegrace is trying to advertise and finance his way into the Presidency. He will not get there, but as he has the trade union vote very largely and that of others who have been converted to his following by his enormously circulated papers, he will make trouble for us for a great while."

To Cecilia Beaux

October 27, 1906.

You know I put my heart into that letter not without knowledge of the consequences (not in the way of abuse, but of possible business injury to my associates especially in certain directions — a real peril). The personal abuse is doing good service. A stranger writes to the papers that whereas he was for Hearst, now, owing to his mendacious and outrageous treatment of R. W. G. he is against him. And see the enclosed from the chivalrous Riis! Riis told me yesterday that a friend of his had arranged to have this article of Riis's appear in every Jewish newspaper in New York till after the election!

I have had most touchingly grateful letters from the South, and the West, and newspaper praise of a surprising character. Roosevelt's letter is as thrilling as it is brief. People tell me they are grateful for

giving them an "emotion"! Thank God for the power to say things, even if they are not said as strongly as one could wish, in prose. Wait till you see my poetic flail, written in bed last night.

I think he is beaten. His game of cunning has revealed his character even to his followers, i.e., to a number of them. God save the Republic!

To Dr. Jane E. Robbins

TYRINGHAM, October 28, 1906.

The election (they say) is to turn on the size of your friend's eyes — for if my eyes are normal, instead of too small, as Brisbane says, it logically follows that Hearst will be beaten, whereas if said eyes are indeed too small — then, alas, Hearst will come in, and all is lost! The joke of it is, those same eyes have hitherto been attacked on the ground of their too saucer-like spread! But what difference, after all, as to the size of eyes, if they are big enough to see through a fraud they will serve their purpose. What a brick Riis is — impetuous, generous, it is himself I seem to see rather than myself in his doughty dithyrambs. Since your letter things look a bit more cheerful. Hearst's treatment of men like Whitney on the one hand, and his alliance with Tammany on the other, are losing him votes; Hughes is making friends constantly. I think he will do great things. He must!

To H. G.

November 6, 1906.

What do you think? I find that Watterson's paper, in its argument against Hearst with a Charleston newspaper, reprints my letter entire, asking them to read it. Watterson is fighting a New Orleans paper also on this subject. It is alarming if men like the editors of these papers help Hearst — knowing his character. They talk about his being the handiest brick-bat to hit some one with. Are Americans going mad? We shall know to-night.

To Grover Cleveland


November 8, 1906.

The way the unspeakable candidate is running behind his ticket in this "afflictive" campaign is most exemplary. I am glad that his kick at my unimportant self had such reactive results.

To John Morley

November 25, 1906.

I have had a lively correspondence with President Roosevelt during the campaign (including some of the "liveliest" letters from him I have ever seen) and I think he was justified in his remarkable interference. The Hearst people got out a "dodger" with Hearst's and Roosevelt's sayings in parallel columns — to make the voters think that the two men had much in common. This was calculated to do much harm. And besides, an emergency is an emergency.




We are very fortunate in Hughes. He is some such accident as Lincoln, Cleveland, and Roosevelt. He has a highly difficult position but correspondingly great opportunities. He personally carried the campaign and never made a break — though it was his first experience on the stump. And his utterances before and after the election had the right ring. His clear-cut statements of the situation, and the nobility of his appeals reminded me of a certain member of the British Cabinet. It is thought he will "make good."

To Hart Lyman

November 12, 1906.

The smoke of the late skirmish (are we to have a more serious battle yet?) having rolled away — I wish to express my appreciation of the "Tribune's" generous seconding of Riis's chivalrous (if, as to praise of me, exaggerated) rushing to my rescue. I am reminded that after we got our Tenement House laws through, in 1894-95 a similar most kindly editorial appeared in the "Tribune." I blushed when I read the first editorial, and went 'way up in the Berkshires, to our farm, and hid in the woods and blushed again when I read the second.

But if I make a single vote for the like of Hughes (and I have heard of several) I shall always be willing to contribute both my bruises and my blushes to the cause.



To J. B. Reynolds

November 25, 1906.

As for patronage: No, there's no use in my applying. I tried to get a constituent of mine a place as rat-catcher in the White House under Cleveland and was thrown down, notwithstanding that President Procter, of the Civil Service Board, said he'd arrange the examination and Commissioner Roosevelt said that Mrs. Cleveland having denied that there were any rats to catch, he would furnish the rats. I have tried again under Roosevelt with equal failure. So what can I expect of Hughes, who is only a governor! Hang politics, anyway! Candidates are perlite, but incumbents are ongrateful.

You ought to see my bunch of letters from T. R. Well, you'd think that he and Root and Riis and I did it. And (as I said to Charles G. Leland, when I read his book about how he and I fought, fit, died, and bled, to save the Union in the great war) I'm not sorry, for my part, that I did it!

CHAPTER XI

EDITOR AND AUTHOR

IN following thus far the current of my father's days, I have often mentioned, but I have not greatly dwelt upon the fact that underlying all his political, philanthropic, and purely social interests, was his creative impulse, his love of "art and song." This "fire divine" found its expression not only in verse, but in his editorial and literary work as well. In the following chapter I have gathered together certain of his letters bearing on these subjects, beginning with a number on editorial matters and following them with others on literature and art. A third division is devoted to self-analysis, — letters in which he has not only answered inquiries on verse technique and method, but has touched upon the deeper questions of inspiration and significance.


From the correspondence covering the thirty-eight years of his editorial career I have chosen the letters dealing more with his aims and ideals for the magazine than with his treatment of manuscripts submitted to him. Most of his purely editorial letters are so detailed, so personal to the author and to the story, article, or poem under consideration, that they cannot be used here, while others are merely little

notes of "divinely helpful encouragement," as one contributor called them.

In his editorial relations as in his everyday life, he was so unfailingly kind and sympathetic, so sincerely interested and concerned with the fate of the author and his contribution that he was able to maintain his position of critic and judge with the least possible pain to those he had to rebuff. Indeed, Bill Nye said of him that "he could return rejected manuscripts in such a gentle and caressing way that the disappointed scribblers came to him from hundreds of miles away to thank him for his kindness and stay to dinner with him!"

With all his good humor and his kindness of heart, his judgments were severe and often sweeping — and they fell quite impartially upon the great and small. He did not hesitate to point out an infelicity in a poem by Longfellow or a story by Kipling, a criticism which was apt to be accepted by such men as these even more readily than by less distinguished contributors.

Mr. Cable, who knew my father from the beginning of his editorial career, said of him: "In all the first years that I knew him, I did not guess that he was young. The words of editorial council in his headlong handwriting were so sage, so lucid, and so plainly impromptu, that they seemed certainly to spring from the depths of a long-clarified experience, and the inspiring surprise with which I first looked upon the



boyishness of his form, step, and smile, and saw a man of my own years, is now a specially tender memory. I think he was peculiarly an author's editor, and not merely a publisher's. He never dealt with one's literary products merely as wares for the market, but with their source, the author, and with his pages as things still hopefully in the making. He was the author's true friend for true service. He held the highest standards of literary art, and in striving to lift and hold others up to them he spoke with a fidelity which every now and then was unflattering and vigorous. He had no time to waste in mistaken tendernesses. It will be truly said of him that throughout his career he was one of the finest uplifting powers in the literary world."

Some Editorial Aphorisms

What is needed in my business is "ideas" allied to conscience and good taste. Lots of people have one of these three, but few have all in good and effective combination.

The Old Cabinet

April, 1870.

Send Q. S. the usual editorial answer — that if he will put the twenty-page essay on Esoteric Polarity into the shape of a five-page love-story we may be able to publish it. Or we might use it in the form of a ballad that will illustrate nicely with figures.



RICHARD WATSON GILDER IN THE CENTURY OFFICE



I remember Colonel Higginson saying that it was not necessary to eat a whole turkey to know whether it was fit or unfit to eat. My experience with manuscripts is very much the same.

It is a question of tact. — How to button-hole a couple of million readers! If you don't get them by the button-hole they slip past and you have only a special audience instead of the audience that one naturally aims at when publishing in the "Century."

There must always be a steam-engine in any establishment — and the Editor-in-Chief must not repine if he has to perform that function no matter how hard the work done by others.

Re-making a Novel

To a novelist

February 1, 1882.

I wish the Fates had not placed me in a position where I must "judge" my betters. But so it is, and so I suppose it must be.

Now, about this novel. To me it is the least good work you have ever done. And yet it has in it some of your best work, and it is free from your greatest fault, namely, confusion.

I will not condemn myself by suspecting that you imagine that I object to the inculcation of morality, religion, or any kind of spiritual truth in a work of



art. I will not condemn you by letting you suspect that I doubt your theories on this subject. I am very sure that we both agree that it may be done, and that the question only is, is it well done? It seems to me that in the present story (if it is a story) your heart has got the better of your head. The story to me fails of its end because the motive is too apparent. The reader feels that it is a "put up job"; that the characters are dragged from misery to misery in order that the writer can preach his theories through them. The two principal characters are lay figures, "objects" of sympathy. You have turned your mind so completely into philanthropical work that for the time being you have lost your sense of art. I do not object to philanthropy either in life and act, nor in a book — but its expression must, in a work of art, take an artistic form. You and I do not object to the morality and spiritual teaching of Hawthorne, nor to the patriotism and philanthropy of Tourgueneff (whose writings, it is said, freed the Russian serfs) because the form is always artistic.

My dear fellow, I care more for your work than for that of any other writer of fiction who has written for the magazine. As an editor I should not perhaps say this — as a friend I cannot help it. Now there are many things that spoil a literary career. Sometimes a lack of conscience, sometimes an untrained or misapplied conscience — such as George MacDonald's. It has been the greatest pain for me to see the deteri-

oration of MacDonald's work mainly from this last named cause. I think you have no danger except here if your health lasts. For heaven's sake do not lose, break, or injure the article that you possess, and that under your direction carries spiritual food, no less than intellectual stimulus and wholesome pleasure to so many minds.

Pardon my speaking with so much warmth. I will write now as an editor. Cannot something be done to give the story a less obviously heart-wringing and "reformatory" aspect and end? There are several minor points I will write to you about later. Meantime bear with me in this brutal attack. When my whole heart is in a thing I cannot keep from plain speech.


February 20, 1882.

You are a fine fellow to take my belaboring so generously. I am sure you can make a good book out of most of those characters, and the opening is just stunning.

April 19, 1882.

Did you get my telegram and understand the same? I meant that the first installment is up to the mark, in my judgment. If you keep on at that rate you will have a fortunate journey and a capital book. Such fine artistic work warms the cockles of an Editor's heart!¹

¹ It is interesting to note that this novel, published at first serially, took and still holds a permanent place in literature.



The Century and the South and West


October 16, 1886.

To the Editor of a Southern periodical

I wish to say something to you about the "Life of Lincoln" and about the general conduct of the magazine. You must know that we have always held definite and the same opinions in regard to the question of the War. We have our own views and frequently express them, on other burning questions, such as Civil Service Reform, Church Union, the Labor question, Protestantism and Catholicism, Art, Literature, etc. The fact that the "Century" publishes varying views from its contributors on these and other subjects does not imply that we have no mind of our own or no policy of our own. The great force and utility of the "Century's" attitude toward the South rests on the fact that we are national and antislavery in our views and have been so from the beginning. It is of no particular utility to the South to have a Southern periodical manifest hospitality to Southern ideas, but it is of great use that a Northern periodical should be so hospitable to Southern writers and Southern opinion, and should insist upon giving a fair show to Southern views even when they were not altogether palatable to our Northern readers, among whom, of course, is our greatest audience. There would be no significance in the entirely friendly attitude of the "Century" toward the South if we were a Southern

periodical or a Northern pro-slavery and Democratic review. You will remember, perhaps, the Great South papers wherein, soon after the War, we undertook to show to the world the evidences of returning prosperity in the South, and to help along the Union sentiment throughout the country.

After having done what we have for the South — and what we expect to do — with entire sincerity we now ask the South to listen to the story of the War from an entirely Northern point of view. In the "Life of Lincoln" you will doubtless read many things that you will not like as a Southerner, but we think that in courtesy to the "Century" you should not refuse to read this statement made from the Lincoln point of view. Even if you do not agree, it will be useful to you as Southerners to study the subject, not as heretofore from such writers as Jefferson Davis, but from two Northerners who represent Mr. Davis's opponent, Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln was, as you know, a moderate man and really a Southerner, and we think that the temper of the South is such that it will listen to the story of his life and not show undue sensitiveness at the things in that story which may distress the Southern readers. This temper of attention will not prevent proper and just criticism if the documents do not prove the position taken by the writers. The "Century" from the beginning has tried to establish the principle of freedom of discussion and not suppression of facts and opinions on



burning questions. It would be a sign of narrowness and provincial over-sensitiveness on the part of the South if it could not, at this late day, endure the presentation of the story of the conflict from the point of view of Lincoln and his closest companions.

To Roswell Smith

MARION, MASS., August 21, 1884.

When we meet you will have, I am sure, much to communicate that letters cannot easily contain. It is curious how even in a little place like this one meets with wayfarers who open up a new corner of the universe to one. It is here that I have learned most about the New Orleans World Exposition, its history and aims. How much I should like to run down there; seeing not only the South but a piece of the great West, the stalwart West, the Blaine-loving, swaggering, hearty, enthusiastic, East-hating, jealous West! This dislike of Eastern colleges, etc., is the beginning of self-consciousness. Civilization is travelling westward on the million wings, shall we say of the "Century" — and shall travel on those of the Century Dictionary, too, I am sure! I am greatly interested in this enormous, somewhat vulgar West. I am glad we can hang on to it through such heated terms as the present campaign — in order that now and hereafter we can drop in a word now here, now there — if not of Arnold's "sweetness and light," at least a word containing broader views than those they

seem too often to entertain. This is one of the reasons I am pleased with the war series. That is "stalwart" enough. There can be no accusation of æstheticism or cant about that. It will be a good platform on which to stand while preaching against demagogism in all parties and all sections, and in all fields of thought.

To Maurice Thompson

November 1, 1886.

What makes a magazine "go" in a business and moneyed point of view, is not the individual writers; it is the combination which is made by the editors backed by the publishing enterprise. I would guarantee to start a magazine next year and make it a success without the use of a single well-known name in literature — simply by the combination — if I had the right kind of publishers. A literary man often sees a periodical make a lot of money, apparently out of his brains. There is some truth in this, but it is a sad fact that the rewards of pure literature are slow and not necessarily moneyed in character, and that editorial and business sagacity will always bring more moneyed returns than the other. We put a poem or an artistic story in next to a war article and that number of the magazine has a large circulation, but it is the war article that gives it the circulation and us the power to pay authors, rather than the individual story. It is partly for this reason that I am so strongly

in favor of international copyright. I want to see authors have a firmer property and better pay, and I am anxious to have all literary values increase. But after all that can be done it will always be hard for a conscientious man to devote his whole time to literature and support his family on the proceeds. The trouble is that even an artist in words cannot always tell whether he has produced a genuine article or not. A man builds a bridge, it carries a train of cars, and he is paid for his work. The bridge is strong: it answers the purpose and is really a bridge. A work of art is never surely a work of art. It may take a hundred years, it may take three hundred before a man can be sure his work of art is what he hoped it should be. By that time he is a mummy and only his immortal spirit can smile at the compliments of the press.

November 18, 1886.

You ask: "Has the 'Century' any large share of Western made literature for this largest audience?" I believe you are the man who has said about the best thing on this subject in your speech before Western authors. We think it our mission to cultivate American fiction, and we do this to the best of our ability and knowledge. Once or twice we have been caught, so to speak, with an American serial of inferior merit owing to the failure of writers to come up to their usual mark. Such accidents have not often happened with us and are not likely to happen again.

You ask why certain names run like a monotone through the table of contents from year to year. In the "Century" we put everybody on his mettle with every separate piece of work, and if names recur, as thank Heaven they do recur, it is simply because, according to our perceptions, the writers continue to do good work. The fact is that we are remorseless in this office in editing. We undoubtedly make constant mistakes, but the mistakes are honest ones. A story now in our safe from one of the best writers in the country went back to that writer I think at least five times, and was improved every time. We certainly shall never accept articles from Western and Southwestern writers because they come from those sections. Do you remember that Bret Harte's long novel appeared in the "Century"? Are Cable, Maurice Thompson, Mrs. Foote, Bill Nye, Hay and Nicolay, John Muir, Joel Chandler Harris, Henry King, Robert Burns Wilson, E. R. Sill, Octave Thanet, Joaquin Miller, Edith Thomas, Edward Eggleston, Mark Twain, and a number more I could name, particularly Eastern writers? Are there any better writers in the West and South than these? Are there any as good, except Miss Murfree, who has long promised to write for us? It was the "Century" that brought before magazine readers Eggleston, Mrs. Foote, and Harris. If there is anything more Western than the "Life of Lincoln" as it is now appearing in the "Century," please let me know by telegram what it is.

As for prices, we are always pushing them ahead here. And still this magazine business is a dangerous one. How few succeed! How many fail, and fail disastrously.

To Mark Twain

January 8, 1886.

MY DEAR CLEMENS:— I am going to venture upon an indiscretion. I have had a letter from a superintendent of public schools in a distant part of the West, and am sending you my letter to him. It was not written for your eye. I could go over it and make it much more complimentary to you and leave out something that sounds harsh, but I have concluded to send it to you as it is, as a sample of what often occurs here in the "Century." Here is the letter:—

"*Dear Sir:* We thank you sincerely for your kind and frank letter. We understand the points to which you object in Mark Twain's writings, but we cannot agree with you that they are 'destitute of a single redeeming quality.' We think that the literary judgment of this country and of England will not sustain you in such an opinion. I ask you in all fairness to read Mr. Howells' essay of Mark Twain in the September number of the 'Century' for 1882. To say that the writings of Mark Twain are 'hardly worth a place in the columns of the average county newspaper which never assumes any literary airs' seems to us to be singularly untrue. Mr. Clemens has great faults; at

times he is inartistically and indefensibly coarse, but we do not think anything of his that has been printed in the 'Century' is without very decided value, literary and otherwise. At least, as a picture of the life which he describes, his 'Century' sketches are of decided force and worth.

"Mark Twain is not a giber at religion or morality. He is a good citizen and believes in the best things. Nevertheless there is much of his writing that we would not print for a miscellaneous audience. If you should ever carefully compare the chapters of 'Huckleberry Finn,' as we printed them, with the same as they appear in his book, you will see the most decided difference. These extracts were carefully edited for a magazine audience with his full consent.

"Perhaps you know my friend Dr. George MacDonald, the celebrated novelist, lecturer, and preacher. He is one of the most spiritually minded men now living, and a most enthusiastic admirer of Mark Twain. Once, when Dr. MacDonald was staying at my house, he spent some hours in reading, with great delight, one of Mark Twain's books, before preaching one of the most profound, moving and spiritual sermons to which I ever listened."

To John Burroughs

September 22, 1896.

I thank you for your most kind letter in answer to my very frank and somewhat egotistical one. It was

made egotistical by a chance aspersion upon the magazine, the soul of which is, in a way, my soul, which I don't want to see damned in this world or the next. I could go over the magazine and show you article after article, and editorial after editorial, attacking known wrongs by certain corporations and interests. But we always want to be sure where we strike, and not to go into careless generalities when they may do great harm, — because it will be a great while, if ever, before we shall be in a socialistic state, and throw away all the benefits of individual action and private property. We have even risked libel suits in our attacks upon organized evil of various kinds.

To Jacob Riis

January 10, 1898.

I suppose you are getting hold of those "feasts," and I suppose, too, you have an ear out and an eye out for those "heroes of the tenements." I am sure that our friends of the settlements can give you any number of heroes and heroines; and then, we want some more stories, and then we want something else, and then something else; and then down will come another editor upon you and we want that; and then, some other publisher will come upon you and we want that. I find that nowadays an editor is expected to lasso an author about three times a day, in order to keep him well in hand, and so, if you feel the rope

whizzing round your neck you will know there is no harm meant; only the editors and publishers wish you to understand that you are more than welcome.

To a contributor

May 11, 1909.

As to the phrase that you want to retain, make it as mild as you can, and we will see whether we can stand it. Really you do not honor your art, when you think it necessary to stir up a violent stench in the language, in order to make it effective. It isn't necessary, and you have a finer art than requires such violence. I do not believe that a certain writer, who shall be nameless, but who is one of the greatest story-writers in the world, is sorry he took out at my suggestion a disgusting word from one of his most beautiful and famous stories, which was published in the "Century."

To an interviewer

February, 1909.

As I said, I am so busy with the magazine of the present that I don't know what to say about the magazine of the future; except that doubtless the unexpected will happen as it always has in the past. For instance, when we began this magazine, which was in the fall of 1870, all drawings had to be made on wood. That was changed before long, and now, as you know, it does not matter what size the drawing is, or in what

material it is made. Wood engraving was carried to its highest point under our Mr. Drake; everything was engraved, and now everything is done by process. We keep Cole engraving old masters and new — and that is all with us. Within a few years another extraordinary change has taken place, and color has come in with a subtlety that at first seemed impossible. I know in our office we dreaded mechanically made color, thinking it would be sure to be vulgarized; but so delicate a painter as Mr. Robert Reid is delighted with the reproduction of a painting by him, which is used as a frontispiece in the "Century" for March.

To a friend

There are several ways of succeeding in literature; one is to do work which commends itself to the most refined minds, whether they be many or few, contemporaneous or later, another is to attract contemporaneous public attention. The third way is simply to devote one's self to a literary life for its own personal reward, irrespective of the quality of the work accomplished. The last is the least success, but after all if a man is happy, respectable and respected in his chosen line, why has he not succeeded when his life has been pleasant to him? The best success is of course the first one, but the second ought to contain as much happiness as one has reason to expect in this life. Perhaps the only true success, after all, is dif-

ferent from any spoken of above, and that is the feeling that one has expressed one's thought with fullness and power. That is the truest success.

Form in Verse

To Charlton M. Lewis

December 14, 1906.

I am pleased that my books dropped a spark into your powder. Now that things are loosened, I expect you to keep on dropping poems in all directions — lighting the sky of your critical and pedagogic "twilight."

I read your "essay" with keen interest, and — hanged if I did n't understand a lot of it! I second with warmth, what you say, that, "in the reading of great poetry, appreciation is more important than judgment." But your analysis seems to me wise and useful.


I stand up for form in verse, but perhaps you will think me wrong in insisting upon liking the chant of Whitman, when he really hits it off, as in "When Lilacs Last" and "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking." I wish for no other form for these. I have just been reading his "Tears," which follows soon after, and my eyes are wet. What a picture! what passion! What necessary *form*.

Whitman was utterly unjust to other forms. Did I tell you there will soon be a poem of mine in the "Atlantic" giving a view of form which Whitman,

reacting as he did from the conventional, did not appreciate?

You say: "Nevertheless I prefer Rossetti's strictness" to Wordsworth's freedom, notwithstanding its beauty. But was not Wordsworth's freedom the freedom of a man who knows and respects the law? In sonnet writing (and note that the greatest sonnet-writers are not the sonneteers) it seems to me that if we feel knowledge, and skill, and respect for the form in the writer, then his freedom is agreeable. And surely no sonnet of Rossetti's (but here I am, like you, only giving my own impressions) is so great as a poem as many of Wordsworth's and Keats's. I am mightily beholden to Rossetti for his translations — for his "Dante and his Circle," this book, "coöperating with other causes," helped me to my natural expression — but his own verse, with all its beauty, is so odorous of the hot-house, that it seldom attracts me: Yes, here and there, for it is intense, exquisite, subtle and in some poems rich with a unique beauty, and a new lyricism.

But it seems to me there is more of imagination and passion in the two love sonnets of Keats "The Day is Gone" and "I Cry your Mercy," or in either one, than in all Rossetti's sonnets of love put together. Wordsworth's sonnets reek with greatness and some of the best are the strongest in form. See how well the octave is marked in "Westminster Bridge" and "Nor can I not believe." In "Wings



have we" see how he remarkably marks not only the octave and sextet, but subdivisions of each.

And Good Lord! see how Wordsworth's sonnets burst with energy. Take "Inland"; the octave is marked off and just as a mere illustration or extension of his theme, tucked away in the middle of the sextet, this fragment of immortality: —

"Winds blow and waters roll,
Strength to the brave, and Power, and Deity;
Yet in themselves are nothing!"

In this sonnet both the octaves and quatrains are marked, though not in "London, 1802," where, however, the octave is, and what a mighty outburst is that.

A sonnet does not greatly interest me unless it passes into the miraculous; and for me, Rossetti's never does. Much of Mrs. Browning's verse offends me on account of certain traits; but her sonnets turn into miracle, over and over the water is made wine.

I think this is a great joke: You went to New Haven to teach verse and sich; and here a fellow climbs down your Christmas chimney and begins to say things, to lecture on the Sonnet, Heaven bless him! The poor be-written, be-rhymed, be-devilled Sonnet!

P.S. Since closing this a little while ago this evening, a thought which came to me as a poem while dropping off to sleep last night, recurred — and here it is, rather too fresh from the anvil to know whether

it is a good horse-shoe, having no hoof, at the moment, to try it on. As you sent me a sonnet, I'm inclined to risk sending a "return ball," for whatever it may be worth. (You, not being an editor, will know the innocency of this somewhat commercial phrase.)

Use and Beauty

To Henry Rutgers Marshall

June 22, 1899.

I have been doing my work at home, that is, in the mountains, this past week. In order to brace my brain for reading manuscript, and for model farming, I finished your most suggestive work on "Æsthetic Principles." I made amateur notes here and there, but one of them inclines me to unload an idea upon you — if it is an idea.

You incidentally, but not fully, discuss the relation between *use* and *beauty*. The thought came to me while reading this part of your work that there might be a reason why certain useful things are *not* beautiful, and why many useful things *are* beautiful. Accepting in the past the dictum that use and beauty are strongly allied, I have often been puzzled by apparent exceptions. For instance, a scythe is beautiful and a mowing-machine artistically ugly; so with a harp and a piano. A pen, especially a plume, is decorative, but a typewriter is not. It is interesting to note by the way, that a piano would be more ugly if its parts showed, whereas it gains somewhat in beauty by the

generalizing of its harp form by a frame. (I speak of the grand piano.) A simple, old-fashioned manpower printing-press is pleasing as a type, especially when compared with a modern, complicated, rotary steam press.

It occurs to me that possibly there is an agreeable impression on account of the evident application of force to the instrument, as one might say, at both ends. For example, a scythe suggests the power with which it is wielded — the figure and arms of a man, and the force against which it contends, namely, the standing harvest. The eye easily takes in, in this case, the fact that the instrument is directly fitted to its use as commanded by the human form; all its parts are easily grasped by the eye and mind; whereas, in the case of the mowing-machine, there is a fatiguing complication of mechanism not easily and restfully apprehended.

Some light may be thrown on this subject by what you say about the suspension bridge and the law of gravitation. In this case you do not find beauty in the suspension bridge because of its use; but here the agreeable relation of the lines to the controlling force may be analogous to the relation of the lines of the scythe to the force which wields it, as well as, as I said before, to the force to which it is opposed.

Can you see what I am struggling to express, and is there anything in it? As I understand it, you account for what relation there may be between use and

beauty by the "Phenomena of habit." You take exception to Spencer's explanation which makes gracefulness dependent upon adaptation to ends, but my suggestion brings in the relation between objects and forces, as indicated in your reference to the law of gravitation and the suspension bridge, as above stated.

Walt Whitman

To Horace Traubel

April 17, 1905.

I have set aside everything and have given myself up to your book day and night, with intense interest, much keen delight and some pain. Of course it wounds me to have the evidence of what I knew really all along, I suppose, that Walt could not understand my own aims in poetry. But I did not love him and his art for any recognition I could get from him, but because both his immense art and his personality appealed strongly to me and I could never be grateful enough to one whose chants had thrilled me as his did, and had entered so deeply into my thought and life and into those of so many who were dear to me.

From my point of view Walt Whitman, had he not unconsciously absorbed a sense of beauty, a sense of art which is merely the right and proper, the very best and noblest expression, he would not have made a ripple in the current of the world's literature. A poet must have two things, insight — the vision, and the power of telling what he sees. Walt had the first,

intensity of imaginative vision, and he had the second also; and without the second he would have been a passing prose essayist and not a world poet such as he is.

Lord, how I envy you your opportunity of helping as you did that man. He was chuck full of faults, of narrowness, but also of attractiveness, of kind heartedness, of human affection, of genius.

His poetic ability was trained by great examples though he varied from them; but much of it, as in the case of all great artists, was instinctive. He underrated form, *but he had it!* There is no art without the *obstacle of form*. This is the reason that poetry is greater art than prose and carries farther. But all this is another story.

It is a great satisfaction to know that Walt felt so kindly personally. If we had seen more of one another he would have understood that my whole idea of life and art was different from what he supposed.

To Dr. Clara Barrus

May, something or other,
in the time of early blossoms and
morning miracles — 1906.

I have just been reading through — rapidly — our chum Burroughs's revised book on Whitman. Here and there to my mind, he makes a mistake, perhaps, of fact; but it is a fine, a thrilling book. The interesting thing about it being this, that it vibrates from beginning to end with the Whitman vibration. That

is what Whitman does to a man, he sets his whole being tingling. I am always talking about Whitman and yet I wish that the talk, so far as it is controversy, would stop, and let us simply enjoy him. What a nuisance if when one approached the roaring marge of the ocean one's mind was confused by arguments concerning it. I hope to see the time when Whitman's strengths and failures, his genius, his ignorance, his silliness, his grandeur, his ugliness and beauty will be thoroughly understood of all men, as are the ocean's rankness and horrors, its cruelty and tenderness, and loveliness and magnificence — so that we can take him as he is, be enveloped in him, be lost in his raptures, and sail into his celestial distances.

To Bliss Perry

October 21, 1906.

This summer has been full of Whitman for me. I have read over 200,000 words of Traubel's unpublished Reminiscences; also your book, and a lot of W. W.'s poetry again, and have talked with some of those who knew him.

It is strange that with all one's knowledge of his early incontinence, of his early and late money peculiarities, of his outrageous self-puffery — still my memory of the old man is of a lovely, affectionate, clean character. The good in him was more powerful than the bad, just as the good in his books is more powerful than the absurd, the pompous, the ani-




mality, and the poetical failure. The fact is that the dear old man who stood holding my hand outside of the church at Bryant's funeral, is the one I love — not the self-conscious semi-hobo; and the poet that stirs, astonishes, thrills and uplifts me is not the ranting theorizer, reagitating (in prosaic and sometimes comical verse) the Emersonian doctrine like a madman; and stripping off his clothes in half-animal and half-religious frenzy.

For years I have been comforted by a new realization of the old doctrine of the defect of the quality. The way I have often put it is this: — especially in our day it is rare that a man makes a tremendous impression in any line without having vastly too much of the thing that gives him his success. Whitman could not have reacted so effectively if he had not had a tremendous push, and this push simply sent him too far.

And again, men of letters as well as men of action work most effectively on some theory — like Wordsworth, like Whitman. Whitman's philosophy was at fault; but it was his "working hypothesis." There is no reason, however, that others should accept *his* "working hypothesis." That is the mistake of his "hot little prophets." (Good for you!)

I like extremely your exposure of his fault in the lack of appreciating degrees of excellence. He did not lay enough stress upon the climbing soul. As to form, it would not be hard to prove that he had form, as Stedman maintains, and as I said of him in the words



you quote. Even his misuse or invention of words was a sort of ornamental form; he must have that word wrong or right, it suited his line as well as expressed his thought. It was part of the music of his verse. He would in this go to greater lengths than any other poet, he ravished the language to bring it to his uses. When I asked Whitman whether he thought his form would one day be accepted as one of the forms of verse to be used by others, he said he rather thought not — that what people liked was the individuality, personality, urge, go, etc., etc., as used by him.

In writing to Traubel the other day I praised his extraordinary out-Boswelling of Boswell. It is a marvellous piece of reporting, some of which I will use. The affection shown in this second book for Mrs. Gilder and myself surprised and touched us. We had no idea that he felt as he did, for we supposed that we did not come up to his idea of disciples. Disciples we were not, but great admirers of his poetry we assuredly were, and likers and accepters of him personally. It was like a voice of friendship from the grave, and made us grateful to Traubel for preserving his fervent words and the record of his gratitude toward us.¹

But because you have just written a book about Whitman is no reason why you should be compelled to read a whole book about him by me.

¹ See, on page 66 of this book, the quotation from Traubel's "Walt Whitman in Camden."

But you are not to be let off. In reading the records of his talk, I find that he resented the cynicism not only of Gilder, but of Dante, Shakespeare, Lowell, Arnold, Stedman, and *Whitman*! He absurdly underrated his own "Captain, my Captain!" How, then, could he help calling my verses porcelain — verses as in "The New Day," as intensely sincere as "Leaves of Grass," whatever lack they may have otherwise. "Porcelain" — Good Lord! If it had been that it would have been smashed long ago. He got to understand it better, however, and said that we were alike in "emotion." But as Miss Beaux said to me the other day, "How much better that he should have been a creator than a critic." For instance, he greatly underrated Charles de Kay's poetry. Emerson was as quick to see the force of de Kay as he was to see that of Whitman — as Emma Lazarus was witness. Emma said, after she had read de Kay's poems to him, and he had greatly admired them, "Is it not a pity he has so small an audience?"

"Not at all," said Emerson, "he has you and now he has me; when I began, my own brother did not believe in me."


Keats

To Ferris Greenslet

October 19, 1908.

As I owe it to your recommendation that I bought Mr. Hancock's Keats, I want to thank you for calling my attention to it; and I want to thank "Your


Folks" for publishing it, for it seems to me it puts Keats a bit forward, critically. I find it remarkably sympathetic with Keats and what I egotistically like is that it puts into language many things that I have felt and not said, or imperfectly said. He seems to me to get into the heart of Keats's work and mentality marvellously. I cannot agree that it was right to publish the Fanny Brawne letters. (I remember the room where I first read them and then smashed the book on the floor and burst out — yes — I cried with fury.) But what I resent is the criticism that has been made of them. I think the criticisms are disgusting and not the letters. Here Hancock is right and Arnold and the "Nation" and the "Post" of the other night are surprisingly wrong. In fact, those letters, while pitiful, are not "common," are not any of the things that certain critics have said in their disparagement. I would rather have written them than the slighting things that have been said about them. They are indeed a touchstone as to the possession of certain rare and beautiful traits that many critics have come to grief against. Scornful criticism of them is a revelation of a certain limitation on the part of the critic. One can easily understand the cold, dry intellectuality, the clear and colorless light of Arnold's great genius, falling unsympathetically upon them; and I dare say there is something in the personality of all the severe critics that would account for their attitude.



The same may be said of the criticism of the early poems. Faulty? Of course — but they are not inconsistent with the strength that grew and grew and which resulted in a body of accomplishment unprecedented (is it not?) in the poetic art of the world at so great youth. And of all the poets of his generation was he not the wisest in the conduct of life, he the poet of poets, the proclaimer of beauty! Hunt, Byron, Shelley, did they know so well how to *live*? And as for caddishness — O Lord — compared with Byron!

Is it not likely that if he had lived as long as Milton he would have rounded out his interest in life — that the sense of conduct, the generosity of spirit, the friendliness of the man would have led him to greater inclusiveness of human sympathy. He might not have succeeded in the dramatic direction, but his spirituality, his fundamental justice and love of truth would surely have led him to a wider vision of human conditions and possibilities.

I finished the book on the train last night, and something that Hancock said about emotion reminded me of a phrase of mine in a talk I have made occasionally on "Poetry as a Means of Grace." (I had forgotten that Keats regarded it as superior to Christianity!) So in order to present my phrase I turned it into verse, which I might not have done except under the excitement of Hancock's praise of Keats. Is it sound? Is it an "epigram" — i.e., a real one?



In each pure rose of art, — earth's richest dower, —
Lives an emotion molded to a flower;
In every soul that wins through valorous strife
Lives an emotion molded to a life.

So here's to Keats — and to his latest appreciator
and defender!

P.S. I shall have to inflict upon you my selections
from his Odes, Sonnets and Lyrics, just out, a labor
of love, which brings me closer to the divine boy.

Don't you wish you had pressed the hand that
soothed his dying brow? Do not gray hairs purchase
some memories worth having?

"How to the Singer comes the Song"

The following letter, published anonymously in a
pamphlet on "Researches on the Rhythm of Speech"
(New Haven, 1902), is a reply to an earnest investi-
gator who asked no less a question than how my
father wrote his poetry: —

March 11, 1901.

What I may call my own poetic mental habit is
lyrical. As nearly as I can remember, each poem, or
theme, or motif (as one would say in music) occurs to
me almost simultaneously in both thought and form.
A poetic phrase (made up of words in a certain poetic
accent and diction) shapes itself in the mind. I do
not realize at the moment what the metre is. I may,
or may not realize what the stanza or complete poem

form is to be. I think that most of my lyrics have occurred to me "on the road," when moving about, going back and forth to my office, travelling, sometimes when I am reading. Sometimes a line or two will rest in my mind for years, and add other lines, like certain creatures of the lower order, spontaneously; it may be in distant scenes. For instance, for years I had in my mind these lines, descriptive of the glow above New York as seen at night from the Staten Island ferry: —

Lies like a lily white
On the black pool of night.

Years afterward, while at Stratford-upon-Avon for the first time, the whole poem "At Night" came to me in a shape that I had never had in mind at all, so far as I know. You may notice that it is not at all Shakespearean; that is, was not affected in form by the memory of Shakespeare verse-forms, as might have been natural in the circumstances.

I have had such a busy life that I have had little time to build poems, hence the brevity and subjective quality of my poems. They start, with few exceptions, from a personal experience and emotion. At times in my mind a line of verse seems to sing itself (not an actual tune but a series of poetic accents); hardly anything at first except a sense of verbal music without words, stirred by the delight, perhaps, in something startlingly beautiful in nature.

In my latest volume ("In Palestine") you will find

a poem which itself seems to be an answer to your question. It is entitled "How to the Singer Comes the Song." After a few phrases or lines have started into being, something seems to say, this is to be a poem in such or such a conventional form, blank verse, four lines with rhymes, six, a sonnet, or else in some new form altogether, with stanzas irregular and unconventional in themselves, but made regular by following on and on with succeeding stanzas, or else with the regular irregularity of the dithyrambic form. After the form is thus established everything is bent to molding the poem according to the conventional, or sought out, or accidental pattern. I find the line is in such or such metre — the stanza in such or such form — well then, it must be true to that form, unless with some variation that cannot be charged to carelessness, but to the deliberate intention or deliberate adoption of an accidental pleasing form. At one time, at what was virtually the beginning of my poetical writing, I was very much stirred by the Italian sonnets, also by Shakespeare's, Milton's, etc., and my poetic impulse naturally flowed into sonnet form; the seed-phrase in the mind was apt to be inevitably sonnet-wise. This leads me to say that I have no doubt that while Dante was writing his trilogy his poetic thought fell naturally into the *terza rima*.

I think the initial thought is generally a line; rhymes usually follow with lightning speed. I be-

lieve this is because my mind, like the minds of all moderns, is full of the music of rhymes. If I had been an ancient Hebrew, or a verse maker of some other primitive race in the early days, the music in my mind would doubtless have been rhymeless — would have fallen with apparent spontaneity into the forms prevalent in the language of the time.

To a student in the technique of verse

March 6, 1907.

Your interesting letter set me to looking over my published verses. You say that my volumes include enough irregular odes to show that I have paid more attention to the ode than any living poet. You may be surprised when I say that I am not conscious of having given any attention at all to the ode; that is, in the way of studying it. I am one of those ignorant people who "know what they like" in the way of form, and if I don't always find what I like, I make it. I am very fond of some of the dithyrambic odes and unconsciously have imitated them. The fact seems to be that this form is midway in my poems as to form between strict sonnet, blank verse or stanza forms of the old type, and chants of a Biblical or somewhat similar nature. (See "A Lament.") I have never thought so much about it as since receiving your letter, but, if I understand my own mind processes, when the idea of a poem comes to me the form comes with it, and sometimes it is a recollection of some

traditional form and sometimes it is a free, almost prose-poem, stanza (or chant); sometimes it is an irregular ode; sometimes it is a stanza new in the distribution of rhymes and line lengths. The latter happens when my mind is pleased with the initial stanza.

Notwithstanding this variety and sometimes freedom of form, I call myself a stickler for form and certainly have an immense respect for it.

To Samuel E. Asbury of Texas

October 8, 1906.

You must know that such a generous letter as yours about "Music in Darkness" and "The 'Cello" can but be very encouraging to the author of them. I fear you overrate the verses but I am heartily glad you like them. I have no claim to musical expertness, so I feel a certain temerity in a venture I am about to make in printing a collection of verses solely about music.

A gray moustache, of course, likes to think that he does not lag superfluous — so from this point of view, also, I am your debtor.

Your letter going into such technical details surprised and interested me. As you imagine, I never let myself be absorbed in technicalities; in fact, I have n't a good head for them. The technicalities of the sonnet came to me easily — I have written as many as four a day. My idea is that the technical thing should be at one's finger-ends and utterly for-



gotten, just as it must be with the pianist; and yet I have never studied technique at all except as to the sonnet — oh, of course, I have at different times tried to get into my head some idea of scansion; but if there is anything good in my technique it is because my mind was saturated with the best examples and that I was trying to say the thing *right*. Is not that the best way, after all? Then if there is any music in you the lines will come out musically.

January 2, 1907.

Rotoli's music for "After Sorrow's Night" is very singable, and has a pretty feature, a sort of echo. Aus der Ohe has set several songs of mine to music; Mrs. Wood, "Not from the Whole Wide World" and there have been dozens of settings not so good.

I just happen to come upon Longfellow's (Elegiac Verse)

"So the Hexameter, rising and singing, with cadence sonorous,
Falls";

semicolon! And last line of Hermes Trismegistus,

"that o'er me
Breathed, and was no more."

You'll have to have that comma back in "The 'Cello" — "Rose, and looked forth." Ah, that Trismegistus, *almost* worthy of Poe, certainly most beautiful!


I was at my club one night here, and saw Longfellow had written this poem. I wrote to him immediately asking whether it was engaged and he sent it right on!

I called his attention to a slight slip, which he immediately corrected — unlike some younger poets, one of whom, about that time, when I pointed out an infelicity said that what he wrote, remained!

March 26, 1908.

I think you are one of the few men in this country who really read poetry. It is a comfort that there is at least one person who is addicted to such pleasures.

I think you push too far your theory about the long poem. Let them write them who can, but unless the epic or dramatic work is lyrical, so to speak, in all its parts, it is not poetry, whatever else it may be. A good argument could even be made against your entire theory showing that valuable minds have wasted time on the long effort when the short one would have been more profitable. Can you imagine any greater waste of precious time than Keats's hammering at those absolutely negligible dramas of his? He ranks to-day close to Shakespeare and it is on his odes, lyrics and sonnets, all short pieces. Tennyson certainly never added anything to his reputation or his position by his dramas, and Longfellow's "Divine Tragedy," what do you think of that compared with his lyrics and sonnets? Would you advise Robert Burns to write epics or dramas? Would he have stood any higher on the roll of fame? He, too, was in the class with Shakespeare. And what would you have said to Poe? Where does he rank in American



poetry? Would you have advised him to write epics and dramas? And yet I agree with you that if one has it in him, has a true call, he ought to try it.

Religion and Orthodoxy

To a friend

September 24, 1894.

When you ask me if I really believe what the poem "Non Sine Dolore" says, I must say that I felt it all when I wrote it, and "Hide Not Thy Heart" is my creed in such matters of expression.

It is philosophically reasonable to suppose that there is no condition of existence without some sort of stress and strife. It seems to me "orthodox" in a certain way to believe that it is possible for the spirit to suffer after the change of death, if Divinity itself can suffer. On the other hand, it is a thing most devoutly to be hoped that there may be some evening-up in a future state of existence for the saints who suffer so out-of-all-proportion, apparently, in this life. The faith of "Non Sine Dolore" is a robust faith, and we might as well believe it as not. It is no more difficult to believe than that God is good, in face of the horrible suffering, often from hereditary causes, in this world. The ways of Providence with man are as impenetrable to the human mind as the idea of infinite space — no less so and no more. So let us look upon it all in a brave and loyal spirit. "Though he slay me yet will I trust him."

The older I grow the more I believe in being good no matter at what cost, notwithstanding the fact that it does not get any easier: Be good, withstand, without insanity of mind or soul, the heavy pressure of the external world. Ignoble are they who must escape suffering through evil doing which always brings suffering to others.

To W. D. Howells


February 10, 1904.

It surprises me somewhat that you should find, apparently, more orthodoxy in the book than it seems to me to contain. One or two of the poems might be said to be a resetting of the Bible story, but the general trend of it, I should say, is away from the literal, and trying to get at the root of the matter. So far as supposed historical supernatural "facts" go, I tried to express in the last lines of the last poem, "In Palestine," the possibility of throwing them all away, leaving the central ethics and aspirations without any so-called supernatural assistance whatever. Please look at those last lines again and don't believe me more "faithful" than I am.

To Dr. David G. Downey

August 31, 1905.

I wish to repeat that I fear you accord to me more regularity of belief than I can claim. I do not know that you do so in what you have written, so much as



what I imagine to be your thought. Notwithstanding all I have written no matter with what sincerity, if put on the rack of categorical questioning I fear I would prove a sad enough "agnostic." Yet when each personal poem, one of experience, was written, it was surely true, for the old leaven of my fathers is deep in my mind and heart; and the symbols of Christianity — I cannot help thinking in and with them, this notwithstanding that historically I would fail of orthodoxy on examination to a degree that might give you pain.

It has given me great satisfaction that my writings have, as I know, brought light through darkness to some minds: I mean have given courage. I have never thought to do more than this, and, as some of my verses explain, this largely comes merely through the aspiration of my own heart out of gloom and self-disappointment. In striving after self-help, self-renunciation, some light from above, I have realized afterward that others were helped — by some miracle. This has made me feel very humble and grateful, but intentionally I have not been a "preacher"; much less an "orthodox" preacher.

November 18, 1906.

If only my dear father could have read what you have written. And when suddenly I came upon the allusion to my mother — "I could no longer read."

But aside from my own astonishment at all you

have said, I am impressed by your patient study or, shall I say, instinctive appreciation. I had not quite realized how much there would be for your argument.

I know well the danger to art of the obvious preachment of truth. Yet for myself I have no anxiety, lest the art should suffer for what you so generously call the "message" so long as the "message" is delivered in the spirit of art — i.e., with a sense of poetic beauty. If I can hope that the expression has never been slighted, that the poet no matter how profoundly he felt and was determined to put forth his thoughts has always been true to the chosen medium of expression — always been faithful to the form as well as to the content — I shall never fear the critical charge of degrading my art for the sake of some ulterior purpose. I hope you felt this faithfulness to the sacredness of art in the work you so sympathetically examined, as well as faithfulness to ideals — ideals which yearly seem of more importance in my mind. For the older I grow the more I feel the outrage of immorality as associated with the lives of artists or their work. There is in the art world, in the literary, but especially in the world of plastic art, an actual preaching of vice for the sake of art. It means merely, at bottom, a new excuse for yielding to temptation, but the thing is there and has to be combatted. This is a time for militant purists — not purists of apology.

To Rev. S. O. Curtice

July 23, 1903.

Your letter does me more good than you can well imagine, for truly one who has only time and strength to write as I do — from what might be called strong personal emotion, experience I mean, rather than a mere sense of beauty or ardor for poetic construction — such a writer, I say, almost shames himself with revelations, the only excuse for which lies in the revelation taking the form of art. At times I am almost startled to think of the secrets of experience I have put forth, written originally with a sense of seclusion, of unpublicity, genuine and complete. Of course much that I have written remains private, my feeling being that such expression must reach the point not only of true art, but of *typical* truth — personal, yes, but not narrowly individual and solitary as to the writer.

So you see that if one keeps on "giving his heart away" there must be some response or the gift will be withheld. The response to me, as you must know, is not in numbers, but occasionally comes such genuine recognition and testimony as yours, and I take courage.

To Rev. W. V. Kelly, of the Methodist Review

January 28, 1895.


That is the kind of "notice" a man might possibly be fortunate enough to read of himself, after a false

report of his demise — something written in the first impulse of bereavement. That in cold blood you should write it and let me see it "in the midst of the fight" is something out of the ordinary. But there is no harm in it to me, I assure you. It comes to me, by the way, in a semi-sick room, after a pause in a piece of work [on the Tenement House Commission] at the end almost crushing; and it simply makes me feel very grateful and very humble.

If for a moment I continue the theme of the "Review," it is to say that surely you must be right about the ancestral reversion. I am not, on the one side of me, a "philanthropist" at all, but rather one who loves what is so truly called the beauty and grace of life — in a word — art. But there is the preacher blood compelling to other lines, and even these other lines are not taken up by intention; in a way one is forced into them, and then driven to thoroughness by the old, ancestral conscience, the passion of duty, of citizenship as a living, unescapable necessity of action.

October 14, 1907.

It was particularly good of you to write me that appreciative letter concerning "Souls" in the "Atlantic." I suppose the very title begs the question. Several years ago when in Washington, I saw some of the scientists and told them I was in search of a soul. If I could find a single soul, I said, I will vouch



for its immortality. One of the chief virtually replied that I could search him! He said that I would have to prove that he had a soul. Another was inclined to suspect that he might possibly have one. This is very curious, for I once knew an old colored washer-woman who was quite sure she had a soul, and I could myself swear to it that she *had*.

To a friend

July 5, 1905.

Last night I dreamed that I had a colloquy with you, and I hasten to write it down. I dreamed that you chided me, somewhat lightly, for using the word "God" so often in my verse. I replied lightly — That it was nevertheless a very good sort of God, for I had made him myself. Then you referred to some one who said in dying that they wanted no God. Then I became serious and said that I used the word God so often instinctively, and largely through inheritance, and that this, at any rate, was true that I had never used the term except in the most absolute sincerity.

To Miss Anna L. Dawes

August 27, 1902.

Somehow I feel that I shall miss my body-mask very much and fear it would take about a million years to get my unmasked soul fit for good company. One's aspirations are all right, but one's inner con-


sciousness, especially one's "subliminal self," is such a wayward and fantastic creature! I sometimes look on with alarm while it shoots off in all sorts of forbidden paths, coming back at my call with slow step and very poor and hangdog grace. I, for one, would like to be judged by my aspirations — not by my performances and cantankerousnesses!

Music and Poetry

To Lawrence Gilman

December 2, 1906.

Your book came yesterday and I have already read it through, for it has that "eligibility" (Walt Whitman!) to reading that makes it read by a sort of unconscious process — i.e., it drew me on to the end. Perhaps it is just the assistance I am in need of. I cannot yet say the right word about the book, I must hear more of "the music of to-morrow." Some of it I *have* heard, with a mixture of curiosity, questioning and keen enjoyment. As I understand the matter, the to-morrow music is to deal more with moods than with action and passion. I confess that the literary art of "mood" comes to me not more poignantly from the specialists than from those to whom the mood is not the perpetual method. That is, while I am often under the spell, speaking of poetry, of the specialist in moods (like Poe, we will say), nevertheless the poet of mood who is also the poet of action seems to me the greater artist: Shelley ("Sensitive Plant,"



etc.) or Browning ("Childe Roland"), greater than Poe; Shakespeare or Keats, greater than Verlaine or Yeats, however beautiful the latter may be. Yet the mood-specialist or expert has his place in poetry, and necessarily also, in music. I dare say that you would agree as to the above. At any rate I feel that I have nothing to tell and much to learn.

I was well-nigh startled at the things said about thought and music. The "Evening Post" in their editorial mention of my "Book of Music," took me to task for what I said about thoughts that could "not be spoken"; denying that there were any such thoughts, that in fact I must mean moods. I had never analyzed the matter, but thinking it over since I have concluded that they were in darkness and that my instinct was right. Our thoughts are colored by our moods, but if there are not genuine thoughts that words cannot express, I am mistaken in contemplating my own psychological processes. In the piece referred to ("Music and Words") I tried to make two things clear; one being the separate expressiveness, the uninterchangeable expressiveness, of the arts, and the other the fact that the mind holds thoughts that are awakened only by music and are expressed only in music.

When one gets to thinking inwardly one gets the idea that there is nothing at all but mood and image — that all else is appetite and its expression. And again that mood and image are very much inter-

blended, for instance, that a certain mood will express itself in a certain image at one time and in another image at another time. The relation of nature to moods is a mighty subtle and baffling thing; and sometimes I think that the latest development, of which you write, the chasing up by music of word-expressions echoed from nature-appearances supposedly producing certain moods in the poet, is a rather artificial and trifling business, for it fastens things together too tightly, and it may lead to self-consciousness, strain and pose. Also, what the poet thinks is a transcript from nature may be a mere expression of his grandfather's physical makeup.

Perhaps the tendency to oversubtlety is a dangerous one; and this may be the reason for some persons' instinctive clinging to the drama of passion and action, rather than the vague and shadowy arts, the so-called symbolism of painting and poetry and music.

I take no sides, but desire to keep my soul open to every development of the beautiful. I can never *think* a thing out — I have to *feel* my way. Gradually the vague becomes defined, and conviction takes the place of doubt, if one refuses to be subject to prejudice, and is open to beauty in whatever form and manifestation.

P.S. By the Powers! on looking again at those last pages I am amazed to find that back in 1905 in the "Prelude" for my book just published I have a para-

phrase of your very words where you say "music's natural concern is with the *Ding an Sich* rather than its symbol; with substantives rather than with attributes; with ecstasy," etc. Now, see in "A Book of Music" —

"the *thing* alone
Well-nigh it is, not thought about the thing" —

etc., down to "pure *ecstasy*."

Again I find, without having seen what you quote from Wagner ("the thought that cannot be conveyed by speech —"), this is exactly what I wrote — half a lifetime ago in the third part of "Music and Words."

To Nicholas Vachel Lindsay

November 10, 1908.

That is a very generous letter of yours just received. I ought not to indulge myself with too much letter-writing just now, even to so interesting a correspondent, because I am in a whirlwind of work, public and private, but I can't deny myself the pleasure of at least thanking you. A very bracing list of preferences that; and I can go the whole length of your favorite poets — tho' having strong predilections outside of that list — with the exception of "Ulalume" in Poe and a good part of Byron. I think while I have a great admiration for much of him I am rather more sympathetic with Lowell's feeling about him. In fact, the caddish side of that aristocrat offends me, and I

find greater satisfaction in that son of an hostler, John Keats.

In Poe the attraction for me, an unending, always haunting one, is found in "To Helen," "The City of the Sea," and "The Haunted Palace." Here the music has both poignancy and grandeur. "Ulalume" seems to me to justify Emerson's word *piano-playing* (piano-playing in the tinkling petty sense, of course, not the large). I hate its repetitions. You don't like, do you?

"Journeyed, I journeyed down here,
 down here."

I would add to your splendid list of Milton, Tennyson, Poe, Swinburne (at his best), and Byron. Those that follow that have been most to me (Milton by good luck was the first, when I was a young boy) — Shakespeare, Dante, Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, Whitman, and Emerson — once for a year or two Omar Khayyám — (don't jump!).

To Ferris Greenslet

December, 1908.

Did I ever tell you H. de K., now Mrs. R. W. G., had a copy of the "Rubáiyát" in her own handwriting, while "The New Day" was being written? There may have been but one other copy in New York, Mr. La Farge's, which also was a manuscript. I thought of publishing the whole of it in the magazine, but realizing that Dr. Holland would never let it appear there

on account of the *wine* therein, I gave up the idea. And never did I imitate the "Rubáiyát" to the extent of a single stanza. This, now, seems to me psychologically strange, that the book should have been so tremendously much to two young people, at such a time in their lives, and that the verse-writer should have religiously refrained from using that stanza. Well, he refrained too, thank Heaven! from using the "In Memoriam" stanza. In fact, imitations of the Omar Khayyám have always been offensive to me, have seemed to be an advertisement of second-rate quality. Do you not feel it so? I hate the phrase "minor poet," but a man marks himself, in my mind, as "minor" who takes so individual and distinctive and poignant a stanza as either, for his own purposes.

To the writer of a review

April 22, 1909.

I note, by the way, that you say, "Humor; the note a rare one — merely high spirits." I don't know whether I ought to give myself away, but I could publish a book of comic verse if I dared, instead of which I tuck it away and only entertain intimates with it; but between you and me and the lamp-post it sometimes gets into our humorous department or into the body of the magazine, even, under assumed names.

*"Apologia"**To Talcott Williams*


February 1, 1900.

I am something of an optimistic fatalist not only about my writing, but everything else — having been able to see in my life, as so many do see in their lives, an apparent "working for good" totally unexpected and beyond the bounds of self-appraisement. Other things aside and speaking only of your kind regrets that I had not done more with my verse, I wanted to express, but I fear I did not express, in talking to you, how I feel about this. When I first found that verse was my natural expression, and when there was not any self-consciousness about it at all, the conceit (no, that is not the word), the self-assurance, was as limitless and infantile as it should be in such a case. As my life went on I felt the call of duty so strongly, and was so deeply pledged in such ways, that verse was scarcely thought of as a building of a "house beautiful," but merely a "lyric cry," the absolutely sincere expression of feeling; and so it has been ever since. I envy those who have had the time and the ability to "build the lofty rhyme." With me it has been almost exclusively a note from an inner pain or happiness. When the music (if music it is) has once taken form, the art sense goes to work and seeks perfection; and my feeling has been that lyric words should have something akin to the lyric tones of

Schubert's Songs. Now, you see, all that comes from the outside to the rhymers of rhymes is just so much added, a gratuity of Providence; and so the words that come from others who have felt the same things and are touched, the praise of workmanship or rather of art, the (to me) surprising appreciation of certain philosophic authorities, all this is a gift of the gods to be humbly grateful for.

But, you may say, I might have had more influence, more honorable fame, if I had been situated so that I could have devoted more energy to art. Possibly, but these songs have come out of the life I was leading, the turmoil and stress and passion of moral and other conflict. It is not for me to give a moment's thought to fame, even to influence, but to do what seems my duty in an active world, only endeavoring that when the word comes it shall come as clearly and convincingly and with as much music as may be.

This is my "Apologia"; I have no regrets. I could have done no otherwise. I wish my voice had had more power, but nothing that I could have done would have changed that. We have the genius with which we are born; the Lord of Life will not blame us for having less than our lofty neighbors are endowed with.



CHAPTER XII
COMPLETE WORKS
1907-1909

"DURING the past year or so," wrote my father in 1907, "I have written more freely, and more in quantity than in any year of my life since I wrote 'The New Day.'" There was, indeed, in his last years an abundance, a richness of spiritual life which sought expression in every possible form. His poetic outpourings were so numerous that there is a new volume of songs for each year, ending with the publication of his complete works in the fall of 1908. These books were, "In the Heights," "A Book of Music," "The Fire Divine," and "In Helena's Garden," which last appeared as the final division of the Complete Works and not as a separate volume. During the year that followed the publication of this volume he wrote enough to fill another slim book.

Not only in verse, but in prose as well, he gained in ease and fluency. He had, of course, written much during his long editorial career; essays, editorials, even short articles such as those on the Brownings, Keats, and Emerson. But it was not until now that he felt a real mastery of this form of expression. With the appearance of his articles on Lincoln in the "Cen-

ture," and their subsequent publication in book form by Houghton Mifflin Company, and with the warm reception given to his book on Cleveland as it came out in the magazine, he felt himself to be at the beginning of a new career. He looked forward with delight to the use of this new medium of expression and took a boyish pleasure in the discovery that he could "say things" in prose as well as in verse.

That other people were aware of this ability was evidenced by the constant demands made upon his time and pen. He was flooded with requests to deliver addresses, to speak at dinners and public meetings, and to preside on all sorts of occasions. During these latter years he was apt to take advantage of these opportunities to "say a good word" for literature, for poetry, for civic patriotism, or for ideals of life as exemplified in such men as Emerson, Lincoln, and Cleveland.


While doing his share in the work of the world, my father did not forget those near to him. His family and friends found in him a well-spring of encouragement, affection, and strength. His fund of vitality seemed inexhaustible; his power of outgiving sympathy only grew with the demands made upon it. The secret of this strength lay not only in the quality of his own spirit, but also in the fact that "the fundamental thing was right." "My songs are all of thee," he wrote to my mother in the beginning of their life together, and after "many and many a year" not only

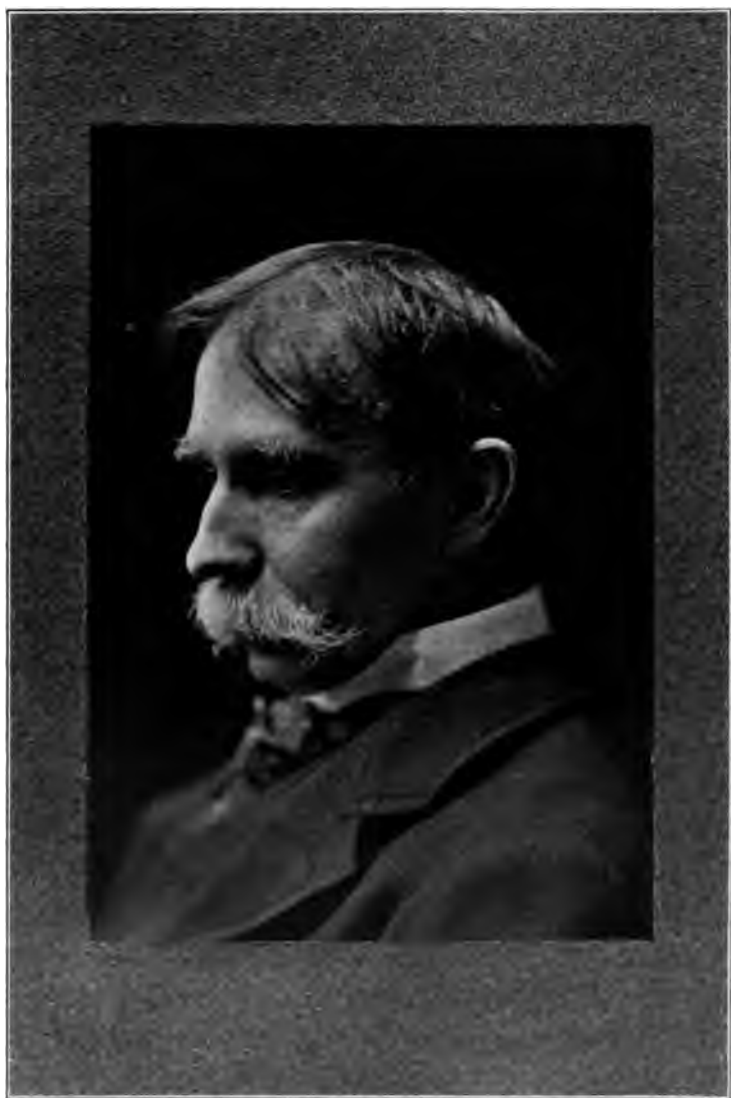
his songs but his whole being is illuminated by the radiance of that "well-loved presence."

Fortified by this happiness, by the richness and completeness of this side of his life, my father was able to enjoy to the utmost his relationship with his many friends and acquaintances. To the end of his life he was always making new friends, though the older ones were ever a dearer and more constant source of pleasure. His last years were indeed saddened by the passing of many of these friends. Joseph Jefferson died in 1905, Saint-Gaudens in 1907. Nineteen hundred and eight took heavy toll; Cleveland, Aldrich, Modjeska, Stedman — all these were of the innermost circle, and each passing was a poignant grief.

In spite of these inevitable sorrows, my father's last years were not by any means unhappy. His nature was too buoyant and too hopeful to become permanently darkened. He was occupied as ever with editorial duties; with public interests, such as his efforts to save St. John's Chapel; with philanthropic responsibilities, such as his presidency of the New York Association for the Blind; — and with the increased public speaking and prose writing which I have already mentioned.

He had by this time achieved a position of distinction in New York, a position described in these passages from a notice written in 1909, which he himself considered far too "generous," for he could never





RICHARD WATSON GILDER



really believe that he was "important," or deserving of the public and private honors which crowded upon him during these last years.

"It is to the combination in his temperament of the poet and the publicist that Richard Watson Gilder is indebted for his unique and almost peculiar position in American life. In other countries than our own — more especially the Latin countries — the supreme national poet is expected in some degree to be a publicist.


"Richard Watson Gilder is the first great American poet to add to our own literature the name of one whose verse molded the thought of his countrymen from day to day. Lowell, to be sure, turned a great national crisis into imperishable verse, but he was somewhat too 'literary' to be effective with the man in the street. He lacked, or rather seemed to lack, what Richard Watson Gilder is always revealing — the thing, namely, to which the ancient Romans referred as '*sæva indignatio*' and which modern Englishmen call 'noble rage.' We Americans are accused by continental critics of an incapacity for this kind of sentiment, but the works of Richard Watson Gilder must always give the lie to that slander. The fierceness of his indignation at any wrong has always been Roman enough to make his verse a national asset. For all that, he has had to pay the penalty laid upon those who vary from the common type. Against misunderstanding, misrepresentation, keen ridicule,

fierce denunciation he has had to contend and probably he will always have to contend.

"Now, in his sixty-fifth year he remains the most active of New York's editors, the most conspicuous of New York's civil reformers, and the sole survivor of by far the most brilliant group of men ever brought together in the metropolis by the exigencies of the profession of literature. It is only fair to concede that, although a much criticized man, he has had his full share of what the world deems good luck. He has not had to wait for recognition until he was too old to enjoy it. His has never been the wretchedness of forlorn causes, for every reform with which his name is associated is to-day a practical reality. He is not cursed with the gloom that seems so often to accompany the poetical nature, nor is he without that practical wisdom for want of which the careers of idealists are usually wrecked. More conspicuous than any other of his traits is a complete unconsciousness of being anybody in particular, a readiness to meet every one on equal terms. His toleration is not only real but sympathetic, for he can look at any subject from the point of view of those who are on the side opposed to his and make the necessary allowances."

A Lecture Tour

In the early months of 1907 my father made several addresses, going in January to Boston to attend a dinner given by the Boston Authors' Club to Mrs.



Julia Ward Howe and Colonel T. W. Higginson. Later in the same month he helped to organize a dinner in memory of Longfellow, given at the National Arts Club in New York, and on both these occasions he spoke. Shortly after this he and my mother went westward on a lecture tour and pleasure trip combined. They went first to Minneapolis, where, on Lincoln's birthday, my father addressed the Minnesota Commandery of the Loyal Legion on the subject of "Lincoln the Leader." On Washington's birthday they joined the Cleveland party, and in Chicago my father spoke at the Union League Club. On this trip he met Dr. O. J. Evans, the surgeon who, as a young man, had nursed my grandfather through his last illness and for whose bravery and kindness my father felt the deepest gratitude.

Writing from Minneapolis to an old friend my father says: —

February 14, 1907.

I enclose a slip which will give you some idea of our activities here. I have, besides, spoken at a young ladies' school and this morning addressed the University. The Lincoln piece I beg you not to attempt to read. But I would like you to keep the Dr. Evans extract for it is about Father. I have to make two addresses in Chicago. I have become a regular Victor phonograph — a desperate talking machine. If any one should accidentally make a clapping sound in

your house while I am there, you must not be surprised if I immediately get on my legs and begin to hold forth. You must at once sit on me if this should happen.

Back again in New York a few weeks later, he wrote to his Minneapolis host: —

“Leaving Mrs. Gilder with friends in Buffalo for a short visit I came home the other day and have hardly got settled into the routine of my office work. I wish to repeat my obligation to you and your associates for getting me to visit your interesting city which I have so long wished to see. It required a strong push and pull to get me out of my rut of work in New York. In this case you did the pulling and Mr. Shaw the pushing.

“Mrs. Gilder and I enjoyed every moment of our stay in the Northwest and we hope you will not forget us before, in some green month, we come around again. You were all so kind that we will surely not forget our new Minneapolis and St. Paul friends.

“It was a great satisfaction to find in my recent visit to Chicago new proofs there of a cheering phenomenon observed elsewhere, namely, that whenever things go wrong some movement springs up to set them right, that every injustice awakens its destroyer, every oppressor arouses an enemy, and every conflict has its hero.

"We have been very much interested here in the exhibition under the auspices of the American Institute of Social Service (of which I am a member) of appliances for the safe-guarding of human life in the industries. I am sure it will attract much attention in Chicago and do much good. The exhibition should be seen in every important centre in the country."

To Dr. J. G. Taylor

March 1, 1907.

My absence in the Northwest is the reason for my delay in answering your letter.

I find it difficult to account for the desire of so distinguished a body as the Medical Club of Philadelphia to do me the honor suggested. However, I suppose it is not for me to be curious on that subject, but only to thank you and your associates heartily for the kind thought and to say that if the scheme is carried out I would be glad to be on hand as desired on the third Friday in April.

To Dr. Collins

March 12, 1907.

The Medical Club of Philadelphia — i.e., its members — have lost their minds as evidenced by the fact that they wish to give a reception to R. W. G. this spring.

I have in mind some things to say to them but I thought you might know some of the recent essays,

or such, that would be suggestive as to the recent tendencies in medicine.

The Saint-Gaudens Requiem

To Cecilia Beaux

August 10, 1907.

We were at Saint-Gaudens's funeral. There is much to tell about it, but it is hard to write. This is an immense loss to H. and myself. Our lives have been entwined with him and his art. It seems a strange world without him.

To W. W. Ellsworth


August 27, 1907.

Rejoice with me and be exceeding glad. The Lord on High has let me write

Under the Stars

A Requiem for Augustus Saint-Gaudens

The first words came to me the night we had word of his death. I did not tell you when I saw you, for I knew not what might come of it. But there it is! An ode — a requiem of ten stanzas of eight lines each; and if you like it as well as do some who knew him well, and others who knew him little, you will indeed rejoice with me greatly that I have lived to do this thing. Every stanza begins with an invocation to the stars, and it all *reeks* with Saint-Gaudens and his works. One who is chary of good words says — but I will not tell you.



Anyhow, it is a fitting sequel to "The Fire Divine"; and I will send it to the printer to go as an "after-song" thereto, at the end of the book, even if it delays it, what difference? — perhaps it would be better to delay it, as the ode might fittingly be my contribution to any memorial meeting for Saint-Gaudens.

Which leads me to say that I wrote to Daniel French that some of us were thinking about such a meeting, and would he join Kenyon Cox and you and me in a small preparatory committee meeting. He heartily approves. Perhaps in the fall we can have a musical memorial, a reminiscence of the concerts at his Studio — with few words.


P.S. Ten, did I say? Eleven — for since writing to you an hour ago a new and necessary VII stanza has come to me from the gods, and rounds out to completion a poem that, I believe, Saint-Gaudens would take unto his heart; and that is enormous self-praise, is it not?

The Chronicle of Four Brooks Farm

To M. H. L.

September 20, 1907.

It is a great and beautiful and holy gift — the gift of affection, the power of affection. In unguarded lives it may lead to destruction, to self-destruction and the destruction of others. In natures having taste and refinement and control, or an instinctive purity, it makes life, — not unperturbed, but a path-



way of blessing to one's self and to all who come within the sacred radius. It is strongly developed in some men, and we have poets like Keats, — a good lover of men and of women. Yes, a beautiful but a dangerous gift, in man or woman; a gift to be held with delicate care, with watchfulness, with appreciation of its blessedness and of its pitfalls. Cruel and unnecessary it is to curb it overmuch, reckless to be reckless with it. It leads into perilous places, but in right natures seldom does it do injury and what joy it can give! What heavenly standards of conduct it creates. For with right natures it goes with genuine, deep self-sacrificing consideration in every direction. False and self-indulgent affection sometimes masquerades in the place of the genuine, but this sort deceives not the elect.

This little essay is my "Evening Prayer" after a lovely evening in the garden.

Business!

September 21, 1907.

H. called into my room, "The men are in the pool," and I rushed out. The screen had been hung up; and first C. B. and the children (before the screen went up, they in robes) had gone in, and then Professor Andrew and George, and then I and then came H. What fun! The marble has such a soft, nice feel. The business referred to above is this; remember to bring your bathing-dress next year, for the pool and for



Lost Lake and the River and, perhaps, the Ice Pond!
"What larks!" As the day goes on, it turns out to
be as warm as warm. The garden is thronged with
Four-Brookers clearing the fountain and rejoicing in
the sun.

September 24, 1907.

To-day I wrote this on an envelope: —

The beginning of my Tenth Volume of Poems in
this September of 1907, At Four Brooks Farm, Tying-
ham. Being the month in which my Ninth Volume has
gone to press. (It will be published October 14, 1907.)

"In Gratitude and Hope."

And in the envelope, I placed, first, H.'s poem of
which I send you this day a copy, and the new song,
"O, whither has she fled."

September 26, 1907.

This morning, after the whirlwind of young and
older guests, all is quiet and into the quiet has come
a printed unbound copy of "The Fire Divine." H.
and I have been gloating over it. It seems like a new
thing; somehow it has a rich look, crowded, anyhow,
I know it is, with experience, with emotion, with
ponderings long. Whether or not it has enough art to
make the world keep it, care for it, who can tell? It
is finely printed. The printer has taken intense, per-
sonal pains with it. He printed it from type; it is to
be cast after, instead of before printing.

September 26, 1907.

I have just been out in the garden. It is autumn, with its rushing winds, but still green — the green beginnings of the fall, only a few faded leaves betray what is to come. The flowers are rich and profuse, the sunlight is intense, and the wind gives vibrance to the colors and the scents and to the whole scene. Then the fountain has an autumnal character. It twists and waves in the gusts and, when on full, it is sheet-like and wears a garment of mist far up the green alley toward the house. The pool is like a little sea: the wind blows it into long waves. Ah, that pool is a wonderful mirror of the life of nature. Watching it you would know all of the weather, all of the time of the year and time of day. Every breeze makes a different surface on it. Sometimes it seems to have no surface, but is all reflection — deep blue of day-time sky, or the starry sky of night. The sunset is doubled in it — sometimes it is fretted with raindrops, sometimes calm and still as the marble of which it is made.

Evening.

To-night (this is a journal!) the sunset was rich, austere, then cold and distant. C. B. had returned from Stockbridge and she and I sat in the arbor, near the music of the fountain, and watched the tragic sky.

I am supposed to be having my vacation, and I warned them at the office that the very "heading" of

the magazine letters destroyed quiet in rural vacations, and yesterday I had letters from: —

The President of the Co.

The Secretary of the Co.

The Treasurer of the Co.

The Manager of the Art Department (two letters).

The Editor in charge.

To-day the Christmas cover is sent to me to decide among diverse opinions. As I analyze each letter, all but one of yesterday's was right to be sent. But it does n't bother me so much this time. I put it in my pocket of remembrance with an, "All right, I'll have my little vacations here and there later to make up." Buffalo, Philadelphia, Tyningham, Boston, etc., etc.

You should see the way H. has arranged, in the centre of the mill-stone tea-table, a great bunch of elderberries. — Is not that a good touch about H.?

"Dream-like comes and goes."

Is that an echo of something? It seems "too good," too fortunate, to be true, i.e., R. W. G.'s. And do you know the one about her silences in "In the Heights"?

A Question of Art.

You have the "Net" poem, hot from the anvil. Now think this over. Should not the word "little" be omitted from the last line? Is it not more tragic? The poem as first thought of was, perhaps, shorter, it was minim — a tender little strain — gossamer, almost; it grew more tragic, and now, perhaps, the

"little" is too slight, too obviously pathetic. Think it over for a year or two. (I wish you could obey the injunction of the Tyingham shoemaker's sign and "*Call in and Talk it over!*") I am not sure myself. I will have to come upon the poem unaware some day and judge it as if it were another's. Perhaps the "little" is part of the tragedy, after all.

Rest — My Hearty!

Five Hours for Refreshment!

Does not the tenth book come on bravely! Four poems surely, perhaps some "Impromptus" beside, but surely four. Pray for the new book, put up votive offerings, sacrifice little white lambs in the shape of maiden dreams to its success.

October 6th, Sunday morning.

Before I was up the enclosed poem was written. It woke me up in fact. Do like this too. You wonder at the flood of them. Well, they are apt to come in floods. One summer it was Aus der Ohe's music; this summer it is, well, it is the garden. H.'s garden — and H. so well and so *in* the garden. One thing that mightily helps is encouragement, appreciation — the thing that even Shelley *must* have. H. made me a poet (if I am one truly), and her appreciation and criticism are the most important things in the world to me. It is almost silent praise; rarely does she show the surety she did about the Requiem. She is not only an appreciator and a constant stimulus, but a stand-

ard — a standard that means the very highest in art. She is anxious, even doubtful, as I am doubtful. I cannot, need not, tell you all she is to my art.

A great reason for my going to town this week is that Saint-Gaudens Memorial affairs are in progress. I will tell you the secret. It is a scheme to have a great exhibition of Saint-Gaudens's sculpture in the sculpture hall of the Museum — one of the greatest, if not the greatest, hall for the purpose in the world! Now the National Arts Club have a memorial and exhibition scheme (and want myself) and then there is the musical service. I must try to pull the thing out right, if so may be.

The Metropolitan Museum idea is only a scheme of two or three men. It would be grand, most wonderful, beautiful, unique and as I told de Forest, one of the best things about it would be that it would help on French's scheme of permanent copies of most of Saint-Gaudens's work in the Museum. To think that the Museum that now consults me thus confidentially is the one whose Director I pilloried as a liar, falsifier and fraud in a twelve-page editorial in the "Century"; going on the stand, in a court of law, to swear to his perfidies! The Institution is now in the hands of those who had no faith in him, and he, poor unfortunate man, who should never in the world have been put in charge of an Art Institution, is in his grave.

Mr. deForest was chairman of the latest Tenement House Commission, a good friend of mine, and opposed bitterly to poor Cesnola in his lifetime. You see I am already hearing the call of the great city the citizen is infringing upon the farmer! But, do you know, all this city call seems a call in a dream. I shall move in it at first, as one moves in a dream. The only real thing being the starry skies, the wind-blown hills, the tragic summits of Tynningham, the Garden, the hymns of a Sunday night (as to-night—"Softly now," "Into the Woods," "Abide with me," and a certain living poet's hymn). As we drove up the road homewards to-night, I said, "The Valley of Stars!" What a pretty name, "The Vale of Stars" for a poem. Look out or it will come!

We do not wish any Society or Club to interfere, by the way, with our musical service. Possibly I will read the Requiem then, or may be not, as its publication may interfere, though deForest thinks not, on such an occasion. It will be simple and nearly all music.

NEW YORK, October 9, 1907.

O, the chilling plunge into office work, after the delightful romance of vacation. I shall try for some more vacation, but the depression of the change into the strain of the city will, I fear, be hard to shake off. We go back Friday to the Farm and I hope to stay up there next week.

October 11, 1907.

The Chronicle of Four Brooks — Happily resumed!

Ah, but that was an unhappy interruption; business and the Saint-Gaudens Memorial sorely pressed, and I plunged into strain, anxiety, discouragement, and depression. But, in the language of the ballad, I "laid down and bled awhile, and then rose up and fought again!" and conquered. One tremendous effort and the troubles were downed, and the spirits again rose! I am no Keats; but imagine Keats having daily to do with business strains, with the remorseless harmonizing of spiritual things to daily necessities, competitions. What mortifications, misery, despair!

To Dr. Clara Barrus

NEW YORK, October 9, 1907.

I have been busy all summer, having a little let-up in the fall. But I have been unreservedly happy, for some of my oldest friends have been near us in the country; and that tantalizing and enchanting lady, my muse, has "kept company with me" — I may say "steady company." For instance, last Sunday, two poems and a half; to-night another poem; even here in town. Coming down in the train I wrote two poems, which wind up I suppose the summer's burst of song, two dozen poems, about, in a little more than a month, all after the book went to press.

To G. E. Woodberry

November 1, 1907.

Your book of "Appreciations" struck me all of a heap. I was just getting up a kind of preachment about the reading of poetry, the love of poetry, to fire off before the University Extension people in Philadelphia. I did not intend to quote from books but to fall back mainly on my own experience, thinking that would be fresher and more sympathetic; but when that book came along with its three special chapters on poetry, and the rest of it, it was so mighty good that I felt like going down and simply reading it aloud. I did n't do this but I quoted from the book and I told them it was just what they wanted to take hold of. I called it (for my lecture was a sermon) Woodberry's "Plan of Salvation." My tone, while serious enough, was interspersed with revival phrases: "Turn sinner, turn, why will ye die." They say it has probably saved a number of souls.

A Presentation Poem

To the Provost of the University of Pennsylvania

January 25, 1908.

You greatly honor me by the invitation to present Miss Cecilia Beaux for a degree at the University of Pennsylvania, on the 22d of February.

I feel some trepidation at officiating on this occasion, and some fear of not being able to "do justice" to so interesting a subject — but I must accept your

choice of the presenter, as I certainly do of the one to be presented, and will fulfil the charge to the best of my ability.

To Mr. Nitsche of the University

February 16, 1908.

Heavens and Earth! Did you ever see a Muse! When Mr. Harrison suggested, astonishingly, that I should present the candidate in a poem, I told him it would entirely depend on that fugacious person, my private and individual muse, who is the shyest, skittishest young woman a verse maker ever had to deal with. When she heard of *your* request for "Copy" I assure you she threw, as it is now called, a fit. Notwithstanding which, after coming to, we had a little confab, and, I should n't wonder, but — Wednesday? We shall see. In fact, this very day the poem is written, but it must be revised down to the last moment. For when the said muse condescends to come, she haunts your pillow, she interrupts your honest meals, she interjects herself into your multiplication table, she becomes as clamorous and exacting as she was fugacious.

The poem "In Praise of Portraiture" was duly finished and read by my father on the 22d of February at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia. Returning to New York, after attending the various festivities connected with the conferring of degrees,

he took up again the matter of the Saint-Gaudens Memorial, which had been under discussion for some time. At the Memorial meeting held in the latter part of February, he read the Requiem, "Under the Stars"; and he did his share in carrying out the plan made in the summer of an exhibition of Saint-Gaudens's work held in the large hall of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Death of Cleveland

To M. H. L.

FOUR BROOKS FARM, Sunday, July 5, 1908.

On Wednesday, June 24, I was at the house in New York when the office called me up and said that some one, whom they did not know, had called me up there to tell me that he had heard from Wall Street that Mr. Cleveland was dead. I afterwards found out that this was Edward Duggan, the livery stable man who has a little house-office, you may remember, on the corner of Eighth Street and Fifth Avenue, — an Irishman, very fond of Mr. Cleveland, and a man we look to in emergencies. I told the office that I did not believe it, it must be one of the usual rumors of the kind. But I thought I would call up the City College, where they told me that Mr. Finley, before going away the day before, had talked on the telephone with Mrs. Cleveland, and all was then well. To make sure I called up the Cleveland house and a strange voice told me that Mrs. Cleveland was lying down and that the Presi-

dent had died. I found that Mrs. Cleveland would be glad to have me come out as soon as I could. In a little while the already sent telegram from her arrived. (She telegraphed to both the New York and Tyringham addresses at once.)

It is strange that ill as I knew the President to be, the news, when it came, was almost like a bolt from a clear sky. I will not attempt to tell you how I felt in that lonely house. It seems that a few minutes after Mrs. Cleveland had reassured Mr. Finley, she learned of a new attack, but by this time it was too late to reach him.

I can never forget my first sight of the face of the dead man, a face of one who has suffered long, but has entered into triumphant peace. A face made to withstand, to endure, misprision and scorn — and to push out like a vessel's prow through storms; aquiline, firm, and now with the look of a conqueror, a Roman Emperor of the great days.

Mrs. Cleveland said to me, asked me, if I did not think that as he had not died in office she might have for him not a state funeral, but such as he would have wished; she said it was more like him — and she could not have lived through any other. The pallbearers were his near friends of later years. She placed by the head the closest friends, those that she knew had the most love for him, and that he himself cared most for, and she asked us to carry him — not have paid carriers, and this we were so glad to do.

On Wednesday evening representatives of five of the principal papers sent to me a personal appeal, asking me to use my influence in their behalf, as they felt that a great historical event had occurred about which they were greatly lacking in details. They called me on the wire. I said that I would do what I could, but that they all must observe Mrs. Cleveland's wishes as to publicity, and that as to the death itself, there really had been nothing dramatic.

Meantime I had already got Mrs. Cleveland's consent to let go out the official telegrams; she having first thought that she would merely give names. I said that names were sufficient as to personal friends and the like, but that official telegrams and their phraseology were a part of the spontaneous honoring of the man and should not be withheld. She asked me to select those I thought should be given to the press.

For several days I was at work on these telegrams, classifying them, etc. She got H. and me to stay over two nights more and we did not leave there until Sunday after supper, when I had to come to town to start next day for Portsmouth to attend the Aldrich Memorial meeting.

(It was on Wednesday that I was to have read those lines about the "Days of Peace" at the City College, and neither I nor Governor Hughes nor President Finley was there, my lines being printed for the audience and read by a professor.)

Mrs. Cleveland asked me to prepare answers to the sovereigns, foreign governments and ambassadors. This I did; she also asked me to prepare a statement for her for the press, which offered to print a letter, in lieu of her writing hundreds, even thousands of replies to telegrams and letters. I started a tentative sketch, but Finley and I begged her to do it herself. When I saw her again on Wednesday last she had not been able to write a word, but I hope Finley can get a personal touch of her own in it, and I may see it before it is issued.

We found that the correct way was to send official notes through our State Department; and Acting Secretary Adeë, her friend and mine for many years, will have charge of this. She liked the draft I made of the letter to King Edward. Strange to say our friend Egan, Minister to Denmark, had written to me that King Edward, when at Copenhagen had inquired particularly after the ex-President's health—and I had sent a copy of Egan's letter to Mrs. Cleveland. Moreover, a day or two later, King Edward had, beside the dispatch to her, referred to the death in a telegram to President Roosevelt in reply to Roosevelt's congratulations on the King's birthday. So the answer said that Mrs. Cleveland was "gratefully aware" of these other expressions of sympathy on His Majesty's part.

The Guest Book at Westland was given them by H. and me. Thinking of the Guest that came on the

24th of June, I wrote this — and at Mrs. Cleveland's desire copied it into the book: —

“To this house, on this day, came a guest long dreaded — but whom we saw at last, through eyes of grief, to be the angel of Peace and Rest, of Victory and Everlasting Life.

“Wednesday, June 24th, 1908.”

It is like going out in front of our house and finding the Mountain of the Lion gone. I have had that man's deeds, thoughts, opinions in my mind so long, that I cannot imagine the world without him. A long intimate talk with him was one of the most inspiring, as it was one of the most interesting experiences I could have. Even his prejudices — his oppositions of thought to certain esthetic things no less than the points of perfect sympathy were important to me. It is an elemental shock — the realization that there are to be no more such glowing talks. It was bad enough to know that as his illness increased we were to have no more delightful outings together, we two all by ourselves — but now it is all to be a blank except in memory.

Were there ever more wonderful times than those excursions down Cape Cod, with him, and Joe Jefferson and the rest — sometimes that *preux chevalier* Governor Russell (a brilliant career cut off before its greatest accomplishments).

The last wonderful talks with the President alone were last summer at Westland, and I expected more of such visits this summer, as I feared that again he could not go to Tamworth. I expected to see him the very day of the burial.

Mrs. Cleveland said that just before H. and I were with them at Lakewood there was a period between two attacks when her husband was feeling well and was in apparent health. He saw things without the nervousness of a sick man, his outlook was cheerful and natural. During this time he spoke of three friends of his and hers, who, he said, had something different from all others — and R. W. G. was one. I am glad, indeed, to hear this, as my own illness not less than his had kept us so much apart this past winter, and, indeed, these last few years.

Aldrich Memorial

To M. H. L.

Tuesday, the 30th, at Portsmouth I read the little poem on the Singing River and another to Aldrich, written long ago and not published. The night before, Mrs. Aldrich had quite a large dinner party at the hotel and in the midst of it I asked her quietly if I could offer a "silent toast." She said "I wish you would," knowing well what it would be — so we drank in silence to "A bright and beautiful memory."

Howells, Clemens, Page, the Governor of Massachusetts and others spoke at the Music Hall; after-

ward a poem of van Dyke's was read at the Memorial Hall, built just back of the house in the yard of the Memorial House. This last is delightful. He was accidentally born a few doors away, but here he spent his boyhood, and the restoration is wonderful, every member of a large family connection helping.

You said I would write poems this summer, but I felt, as Aldrich so often felt, that another out-pouring like last summer was not likely, and yet here have come — the hero poem for the college, the "Singing River," and since I left New York a poem about Cleveland (there may be a group of these), one about my own father's death, and a garden poem.

Summer Letters on Various Subjects

*To R. U. Johnson, in answer to his letter congratulating
my father on being made a Chevalier of the Legion
of Honor*

July 22, 1908.

*Fellow decorated and Wife,
Chers Confrère et sœur —*

Your congratulations are thrice welcome — but what the Devil — what?

Have I unbeknownst conferred a service upon France? Have I unbeknownst conferred a service upon humanity? Or is it a pure case of heterophemy, they having intended to write in the name of Bloodgood Cutter or the Bard of Michigan? *Je suis,*

je suis — *étonné* (am I singular or plural, male or female?).

I had not noticed that any particular international virtue had proceeded out of me, lately, that needed International Recognition. But perhaps it is only, as a friend of mine remarked to me to-day, by way of explanation — only that the ribbon is getting common and can even be bought! Perhaps I bought it and have forgotten passing the check!

To a friend

Good boy to write to me. Discerning people those Frenchmen; but what they discover in this decoration I have n't yet found out. Perhaps it is recognition of certain drops of Huguenot blood!

To Dr. W. H. Tolman

August 8, 1908.

Your letter of July 21st is at hand and my curiosity as to the newspaper reports of my having received the decoration of the Legion of Honor is gratified.

You perhaps thought that I knew something was stirring in this direction, but it was kept from me; so the announcement was a bolt from a clear sky. I thank you for your most kind interest, though I despair of being able to live up to that red ribbon. I don't know why so much of an individualist as myself should get so many official compliments, but as it

brings me such letters as yours, and others that I have received, I can only be thankful.

To John B. Pine, about plans for a new house

August 25, 1908.

For the first time I am favorably inclined towards a composite building proposition. The building is to cover 23 and 24 Gramercy Park, a little beyond Mr. Bigelow's house; 12 stories, 5 owners, 10 apartments to let.

That delightful fellow, Mr. Francis Wilson, is in it, and Mr. Charles H. Lee owner of one of the plots. If I go in the scheme is complete, but they have promised to hold back until you can look into it and see whether you would care to go in.

I have looked into a good many of these things and this is the first that appeals to the whole family. This we rather incline to be a little enthusiastic over and I am thinking of taking the 5th and half of the 6th floor. But we have not decided.

The Bogus Cleveland Article

To H. G.

September 20, 1908.

I am, of course, disappointed not to be able to go up Sunday morning. But you know the business that detains me. We are having daily conferences. The matter is extremely complicated, mysterious and delicate, and the issue may be momentous.

To Theodore Roosevelt

September 26, 1908.

When I thought that both Mr. Hastings and Mrs. Cleveland had been cognizant of the preparation of Mr. Cleveland's paper as published in the "Times," I accepted it and admired its bravery; though, of course, I saw that it was very queer in the way that it was written. I supposed that this came from illness and a difficulty in making out his handwriting. When I found that the thing proceeded from Brandenburgh and that not one in the family or near Mr. Cleveland had ever heard of it before it was offered for sale, that there was no manuscript except the typewritten copy, with a very queer-looking signature, I became suspicious.

You saw, probably, Mr. Hastings's final statement which explodes the whole thing, and I dare say you know something about Brandenburgh. Gompers seems to and others. The fact that he was seen with Mr. Cleveland does not fortify the matter at all. Mr. Cleveland gave him an autographic interview which appeared in the "Herald" for the 22d of March. Mr. Cleveland's serious attacks had not begun at the time this article was supposed to be composed. There is no doubt in my mind that it is bogus.

At the trial which followed, in which my father appeared as a witness on the question of the genuine-

ness of the signature, it was proved that the article was not by Mr. Cleveland.

The Complete Works

During the course of this summer of 1908 my father's chief recreation had been the revision of all his poems for publication in the Household Edition of the poets, issued by Houghton Mifflin Company. Writing to Mr. Greenslet as early as March, 1908, he discussed plans for the new book: —

"The Poems," as you know, will consist of the ten books as named already, the latest being hitherto unpublished as a book although some of the separate poems have appeared in the "Atlantic," "Putnam's," and elsewhere.

I have carefully revised the nine other volumes and in "The New Day" especially I have amended and restored a number of poems which in former editions were entirely omitted.

To Ferris Greenslet

April 17, 1908.

Those Lyrics went astray. I now enclose them. Are n't they "young"? It seemed like infanticide to kill them, now that a word or two put right seems to bring them into line with the rest. Do you know they were written and published in the early seventies

when no one was talking, over here anyhow, about "symbolism"?

Do you suppose that Brother Bliss would like to have as a Christmas present to print any time before this book comes out, the nine "Garden Poems" in a bunch; would it help or hurt the "Complete Works"?

May 24, 1908.

Please — in the poem — "The Passing of Christ" after the four already inserted lines: —

Who made the poor man's lowly
Labor a service holy,
And sweat of work more sweet
Than incense at God's feet;

please let these two follow: —

Who turned the God of Fear
To a father, bending near.

also, a few lines above, change a "holy rite" to "sacred rite."

Is n't it strange? This unorthodox poem seems to be often used in the orthodox pulpit; along with other unorthodox sentiments by the same writer.

The two lines I now send are the result of going to church! and hearing a mighty good sermon. The thought helps to round out the subject with greater explicitness. The proofs (3 batches) have poured in during the last two days and been promptly poured back — great fun this! I feel like a budding author — a Household P—, O Lord!

June 5, 1908.

I enclose an "impromptu" which I never have included in my books. Is it true enough to its theme to be worthy of preservation? Be frank — and if it is n't, send it back.

To Cecilia Beaux

September 10, 1908.

I have read the last proofs of the poems by R. W. G., four hundred and fifty-nine pages — what do you think of that? Suppose you could put into a single gallery every painting that you thought worthy of C. B., LL.D., would it not interest you? And that is what a poet can do. Strange compression of art — of "molded emotion" — for does not R. W. G. say that every work of art is a molded emotion?

October 29, 1908.

To-day came the first copy of the Book.

Very exciting! H. brought it into my room before I was up. I hurried out of bed and we cuddled over the fire and went over it with childish eagerness — the F(oremost) P(oet) and his F(oremost) B(ride)! think of it!

To G. E. Woodberry

January 6, 1909.

It has brought me much unexpected comfort, the publication of my "complete" poems. In moments

of elation I "feel to know," as my Methodist brethren say, that here and there I have, haply, put things in a way that is likely to keep the line alive, for instance, a line and a half in the Lincoln Mask sonnet, etc. But getting them together helps me in this way: I gather courage and confidence from the appreciation of the new men and women who have themselves "said things." The ten books together seem to count more than ten books detached.

But I wish some one else were in the "Household." I don't relish being the only "live poet" in the list. But I had to be considerably over fifty before "the General" were willing to take me as a poet more than in any other way. It seems now to have leaked out that that is what I really care most for. Now that I am nearly sixty-five, they have waked up to the facts in the case — critics and public both. Don't you think it was about time?

Tell me just what you meant about Shelley in connection with those cussed, cutting lines. Are they any more cutting than the lines on a "Portrait of Servetus," "The City," "A Theme," "Desecration," "The Condemned," "The Anger of Christ," "Scorn," "Through all the Cunning Ages," "The Demagogue," "The Tool," "Avarice," "The Whisperers," "Sacrilege," in R. W. G.'s "Complete"? I declare! — don't let this too long list bore you!

To Ridgely Torrence

December 12, 1908.

What you say does me lots of good. I think the appreciation of the younger men and women has done much to keep my gray-haired muse busy. As de Kay said, it is difficult to keep "mouthing to the waste."

To Ferris Greenslet

February 10, 1909.

I have just been overwhelmed by opening a letter from John Lane and finding in it an autograph sonnet to me by William Watson. I had a poem from Austin Dobson the other day, a charming thing as everything from Dobson is, but I put it away in the safe. It was about the Household Edition. This one from Watson, however, is intended for publication. I can see that it is a fine poem, aside from the personal aspect, but it is such a tremendous compliment coming from Watson that I am not myself the one to offer it. Lane writes: "It is the first thing he has written for a long time, and it seems to me in quite one of his happy moods."

P.S. Lord-a-massy, you don't mean to say that *you* accepted the extraordinary and altogether too flattering "Arts" article — But if fellows like Watson say such things as this, your friend R. W. G. will be in danger of losing all his engaging modesty!

Saving St. John's Chapel

In December, 1908, my father found himself engaged in a final skirmish with his old enemy, the Trinity Church Corporation. Indignant at the proposed destruction of St. John's Chapel on Varick Street, one of the very few fine examples of colonial architecture in New York, he was moved to express himself in the following lines: —

Guardians of a holy trust
Who, in your rotting tenements,
Housed the people, till the offence
Rose to the Heaven of the Just —
Guardians of an ancient trust
Who lately, from these little ones
Dashed the cup of water, now
Bind new laurels to your brow,
Fling to earth these sacred stones,
Give the altar to the dust!
Here the poor and friendless come —
Desolate the templed home
Of the friendless and the poor,
That your laurels may be sure!
Here beside the frowning walls
Where no more the woodbird calls
Where once the little children played,
Whose paradise you have betrayed,
Here let the temple low be laid,
Here bring the altar to the dust —
Guardians of a holy trust!

These verses, printed in the "Evening Post" for December 14, added new vigor to the campaign already started, the object of which was to save the old

church from the hands of the wreckers. So far the protests of the congregation of St. John's and the petitions signed by the President, the Mayor of New York, and many distinguished artists, architects, business men and churchmen of the city had been unavailing. With the appearance of these lines of my father in which he attacks the corporation, not only for its proposed act of vandalism, but for its misdeeds in the past, the campaign took a new turn. Defenders of Trinity, forgetting that the writer was also an authority on tenement house matters took exception to the statements contained in the poem.

"Mr.—'s 'easy answer' is amazing," wrote my father to a friend. "Does he suppose I wrote in ignorance? There were when we looked into it, two classes of bad tenements for which Trinity was responsible: those they owned and those they let continue on their land, keeping the whole matter under control with short leases on an economical policy.

"I felt so badly about these Trinity mistakes that I have never before excoriated the corporation. But their continuance in unsocial practices, the scandal they have brought upon the church and the city, made me, with great reluctance, speak my mind out in my 'natural voice,' which is in — shall I say 'lines'?"

It could easily be proved that my father's statements were not poetic exaggerations, and in the course of the discussion in the newspapers that fol-

lowed, the whole history of Trinity Corporation was rehearsed with varying degrees of warmth and accuracy.

In "Collier's Weekly" for January 23, 1909, the results of the controversy are summarized: —

"Three points [have been] gained by the long crusade, which has included a state commission, Mr. Gilder's poem and many columns of fiery description of Trinity's property.

"1st. Trinity Corporation issued its first detailed financial statement since 1814. By exhibiting this century plant it acknowledges the right of a public, permitting its sacred grounds to go untaxed, to ask questions.

"2d. The corporation states that it plans far wider improvement of its tenement house property than heretofore. At this point it shows a growth of social consciousness.

"3d. The demolition of St. John's Chapel has been stayed, at least temporarily."


"Do you see the 'Churchman'?" wrote my father to a friend. "They are unrelenting in opposing the destruction of St. John's. But it is saved, and I think will be used, and the corporation has issued its first statement in nearly a hundred years, and formally promised to be good about the tenements! And I am to dine with the Bishop soon!"

*The "Metropolitan Battlefield" again**To a Western correspondent*

January, 1909.

I will make free to tell you that my ancestral orthodox religionist strain, Methodist, Episcopalian, Huguenot, has fanned in me, throughout life, the flame of a sort of fatalism. Untoward events surely cut me, depress me, but a spirit of fatalism — an appreciation or apparent discernment in events of a benevolent fate — has done much to keep me from despair, even from overanxiety. Pretty much every good thing in life, every opportunity for usefulness or distinction or pleasure has, as it were, been thrust upon me. I have from day to day gone about my work in an almost morbid, certainly inherited sense of irresponsibility; and every business and every public "opportunity" has actually been thrust upon me, after my loud protestations. I have never "sought" anything in the usual sense. I have, for instance, in business, stuck to my present place forty-one years (since 1868). But I only mention this for better acquaintance' sake and to say that it fits into my scheme of things that I should not have been "thrown off the track" by a letter never received.

If I say that your insight into my writings is deeply sympathetic with my own conception of them, it is not to say that I can make myself believe that certain things in your letter are possible. You cannot expect



me to accept all your generous words, towering ascriptions and resemblances. But you have got hold of some things about my book that only the finest natures I have ever known have perceived.

But enough of I and me! I'm glad you are thinking of a short story; I hope it will hit the bull's eye, or as editors are capable of any kind of animal, let us say the donkey's eye.

I am so intolerably busy day and night, holidays, Sundays and all, in all sorts of things, trying not to shirk obligations though getting out of every public engagement possible, that instead of such letters as your last being a bore, they cheer me and refresh me in this battlefield of metropolitan life.

To G. E. Woodberry

January 2, 1909.

New York does not seem to me quite a thing by itself. I look upon it as a convenient, or inconvenient fulcrum.

We miss Stedman. Howells is our "Dean," but shrinks from present, public service. So it looks as if some of the rest of us would about be killed, trying to keep the ideal end up — the idea of ideality.

I wish at least you could preside at the Poe Memorial meeting. Do that and send a letter to the Stedman meeting, if you possibly can.

To Mr. Helm, Phillips Exeter Academy

January 27, 1909.


It looks easy for me to promise to come to you on January 23, 1910 on the condition you generously suggest — that if I cannot come then you will not expect me! Indeed I know it would give me very much pleasure, and I shall try to keep alive and well for the occasion.

To M. H. L.

January 11, 1909.

I have had a true "time withdrawn" at Aurora (Wells College), where I went Saturday, spending two nights there with the President, Dr. Ward, and delivering my address on Lincoln there last night (to help pay my annual contribution to the Church of the Ascension). It was really a rest and a break in the routine; and they said it was a great "gift" for them, the visit, and really it was very touching to me, and moving, such appreciation and such gratitude. This is the first time I have been there without Mrs. Cleveland, who is a trustee and their most distinguished accomplishment.

Wednesday afternoon I presided over the memorial meeting to Stedman, etc., etc. I can't think of all the doings day and night since I last wrote. Sunday afternoon at Wells, the Lady Dean got me to come to her rooms and read a few things and talk a little about poetry as a means of grace. I read them the poem



about F. F. C. and told them whom it described. Among other things I read a poem which I said I liked because of its musical suggestion — namely, “O, whither has she fled” etc. Do you recall it?

I have been out to Drake’s grave; and we are going to threaten to remove it unless the city completes its plans for the Joseph Rodman Drake Park.

Now for to-morrow’s meeting. I have charge of all the details, but in my old age have learned not to worry.

February 7, 1909.

You did n’t get, then, the quotation from Robert Lincoln’s letter about my article? It was most surprising. It is a satisfaction to have one’s articles one of the salient “successes” of the magazine. And you did n’t get my account of my Lincoln lecture at Amherst? (Again a surprising success.) Lately I have made “speeches” at the dinner to the German Ambassador, and at the luncheon of the Vassar Association and last night, A. C. (and R. W. G. as he says) had our dinner to President Eliot, where I “spoke.” This dinner, like the others of their kind, was a thrilling success. I got mottoes out of Eliot’s writings.

On Lincoln’s Birthday I speak in the morning near Trenton at the Lawrenceville School; in the afternoon on the East Side; at night at Carnegie Hall (my Mask poem) and my “Lincoln the Leader” will be read at an armory.

February 14, 1909.

These are busy times. For instance, Friday, the Lincoln great day. George went with me in the morning to Trenton. There we were met by Mr. Greene in an automobile and whisked to Lawrenceville. I talked, not read, about Lincoln to the whole school and their friends for nearly an hour. It was the "greatest effort" of my life, for not only was the audience difficult to hold (therefore I extemporized) but Mrs. Cleveland made there her first appearance in public since her husband's death, and naturally I talked now and then of that other great, honest President.

Back to Trenton double quick, over six miles, a quick lunch and then to New York by train, just in time to speak on the East Side to a packed house of young people at the Nurses' Settlement.

Then home to dress, dine, and up to Carnegie Hall to read the sonnet on the Lincoln Life-Mask. General Porter "did the handsome," assuming the privileges of extravagance always enjoyed by the introducers and using the phrase "the foremost poet of our time." Ginger! Is n't that tall!

A colored bishop was among the eloquent speakers and a cast of the great Saint-Gaudens's Lincoln stood behind us. I remember when I got Saint-Gaudens to alter that statue and give it the contemplative look it now has, and I remember that I got Saint-Gaudens to help me buy the original life-mask of Lincoln for the National Museum — thus interesting him first

in the mask which he used. And I wondered how Lincoln would feel, seeing his image there between classic columns, and in a sea of music and eloquence. Now, turn to the last lines of the Paderewski poem and see what, also, I thought.

We've been meeting the Berenssens; and having the Spanish Sorolla here; and I speaking at a colored school meeting at Mrs. Villard's house; speaking at an Author's Club dinner to Carnegie (semi-humorous verse) and last night speaking at a dinner of Mr. Finley to the new President of the Central Railroad and Lord knows what all — but not more than half the things I am asked to do, I assure you.

Here is the extract from Robert Lincoln's letter: —

"DEAR MR. GILDER: I think it was just a week ago to-day that I sent you a brief telegram, expressing my gratification at your article in the forthcoming "Century," and I am writing to emphasize it. I really cannot recall any article upon my father which has pleased me as much as yours, and it is in reality an astonishing article in its fulness and yet compression."

This touched me deeply, it seemed to come almost from the dead great man himself! Robert Lincoln telegraphed me and wrote me twice about my article in the February number and he wrote to Joe about it and spoke to a friend of mine, who told me, so it can't be mere compliment, can it?

WASHINGTON, D.C., February 20, 1909.

Our feelings in this city are strange indeed, here where we once inhabited familiarly the White House. The good old days are all history — a romantic young woman, a great-hearted man, at the top of the nation — and our close friends. Days departed but dear; and we cannot see the glowing night portals of the White House without emotion. Now Hay is gone, and Procter is gone, and Egan is in Copenhagen and Roosevelt is just going. He wrote me enthusiastically the other day just because I praised his Lincoln speech; and he was very demonstrative when he caught sight of H. in the blue room, and began talking about my letter to him. It was just eight words: "Your noblest theme has brought your greatest speech." And that is so. But see, too, his speech about international resource saving, and his veto of the census congressional grab! He has done some wrong things, but he has done incalculable good.

November, 1908.

God (the Muse) has been good to me, and my Cleveland Memorial poem came, entirely of its own volition, soon after his death — and cannot be read till next March at the Memorial Meeting.

March 23, 1909.

I am just back from Worcester, Massachusetts, Congregational Club; the biggest meeting they have

had, they said, for years, to hear "Poetry as a Means of Grace." And I gave it to them strong. And won many souls, they say — and am your faithful servant. O! I forgot to tell you or did I, that Dr. Johnson is dead and buried in Westminster, and I have lost a companion of years!

April 6, 1909.


I have been busy from morn till morn — half-past two A.M. the other night! I am deep in my Cleveland "Memoirs," adding this to all the rest!

And really did n't I say anything about the Breakfast given to T. R. before he sailed for Africa, with that human volcano, roaring as only a human volcano can roar! — leading the laugh and singing and shouting, like a boy out of school, pounding the table with both noisy fists when they sang: — "There'll be a hot time, in the Jungle, To-night!"

And Now I am going to a spelling dinner, and may have to preside, because A. C. will not be there. I had a great day with Lord Grey of Canada and A. C. — golfing. I fell in love with Grey years ago. He's a noble man in two senses, and a lover of his kind.

April 15, 1909.

What a group of deaths! The other day H. and I went out to Lawrence Park to the funeral of Mrs. Will Low; and our beloved Modjeska is gone, and Crawford and Swinburne.



Sunday last, Easter Sunday, the family climbed to its new home, the unfinished apartment at 24 Gramercy Park, and I welcomed my bride thereto! This will be only our third city house in over a third of a century's life.


April 25, 1909.

I have been so consumedly busy day and night; writing, editing, lecturing at the Bridgeport Contemporary Club, speaking in N.Y., working on Committees, that I don't know which end is up. I have had to decline four A. C. golf invitations, and may not be able to take another day off with him. I'm working on the Cleveland Permanent Memorial also. Last night made a Poe speech (University of Virginia Alumni) without notes. It was a psychological turning point, perhaps, in my speaking career — very reassuring to a timid speaker. The other night it was the Huguenot Society.

June 17, 1909.

After a delightful week-end at Four-Brooks, where I started well under way what may be a long and somewhat novel poem-series, to be called "The Necklace," I have been spending Tuesday and Thursday in court at the Brandenburgh trial — not yet called to the stand, but expect to be Friday morning.

Ah, let us be as happy as we can while we may be in this mortal world — and above all let us be as good, as we may be — and as kind.



To Nicholas Vachel Lindsay

Midnight, Sunday, May 9, '09.

Don't think that such a sympathetic record of a night or two with R. W. G.'s "complete" (not much) poems is going to make him vain. He has had (ahem!) perhaps more than his share of sugar of late years, but this only goes to make up for the fact that it has taken a good many gray hairs and a good many deaths of friends among the poets (alas!) to make people realize that my books of rhyme, — and not this, that, and the other thing done, — were *me*. And besides, I get terrific physical and mental knockouts every once in a while, and so things even up.

I am so busy at my work and in public chores that when people ask me to do something else, I say yes — at three o'clock to-morrow morning, all other hours are occupied. You must know that I shall always be interested in the helpful life you are leading. If you come East, can't we manage to palaver a bit? When *are* you coming East, anyhow? I hope some time next year — if I live — and there are good reasons for my *not* living.

Have you heard of that fool Boston Bacon book, not out yet, but I've seen some of it, and my gorge rises. I love Boston (I'm the only "living, Household" (!) Boston "poet"). But Boston has the "defects of its qualities." If it nurtures geniuses it evolves cranks, and of all cranks the Baconian is the most trying.

*Summer of 1909**To H. G.*

NEW YORK, JUNE 1, 1909.

The Holyoke visit was most delightful, and, I take it, successful. On arriving there, with several miles more to go by trolley, while asking my way who should pounce down upon me but Miss Demarest ¹ (she had not told me she was going),— so I was personally conducted to Miss Woolley's charming new house. That evening, Sunday, we went up to an out-of-door grove meeting of the Y.W.C.A. on the hillside. It was so beautiful and quiet and touching in the darkening twilight, under the moonlight at last, that — what do you think? I actually spoke, in the line of the "Holy Land" sonnet, and one or more other ideas. They seemed very grateful at the unexpected talk.

On Monday the big chapel was full of the girls (not all of them of course, for there are nearly 800 in all) and the teachers and townspeople. Then we went in procession to the village monument, with the old soldiers, and the great girl-choir of the college, and I spoke again. In the afternoon I went on, personally conducted again, to Amherst to meet al fresco the President (Harris) and his wife, Professor Emerson, Professor and Mrs. Todd and other members of the faculty.

¹ Of the "Century" office "Amazon Guard."

That night I was to meet the English class. I thought it would be just a few of the students; but the faculty and the students turned out strong and I had to talk offhand to another big assembly, tho' not so big as in the morning. They sent for my book and made me read from it. This morning I took things easily, loafed in my room and wrote a poem! The poem was suggested by my first night there and a book, part of which I read that night. It is a beautiful place and some of the buildings and all the immense campus are most attractive. Lakes and streams and hills in the campus itself. I think the trip did me good. Certainly it took my mind off this everlasting business grind.

"Cleveland; A Record of Friendship"

To Mrs. Cleveland

August 17, 1909.

I am seriously pleased at the continuous warm reception of my first paper on the President. I send an example of the notices appearing. This seems to be written by an admirer of the great man, but I find evidence that some people's minds are being changed: the paper has, when needed, the effect of conversation. Don't you feel that even the pictures are convincing, the pictures of himself and his wife and his children and friends? I will tell you when I see you some of the things that are said.

To Robert T. Lincoln

August 4, 1909.

I have been greatly interested in the last few days in rounding out, in the proofs, my little Lincoln book. My essay on "Lincoln's Genius for Expression" is much enlarged. In fact, both addresses ("Lincoln the Leader" — and the "Genius for Expression") are I think much strengthened. I have said some things which will give you pleasure, or at least I hope so, as to certain traits of your father. But the deeper I go into the subject, the more interesting it becomes; and I feel the inadequacy of all I have done.

August 9, 1909.

What you say about Mr. Cleveland gives me much pleasure. People used to wonder why I spent so much time with such a man — "the hangman from Buffalo"! From this record, they will see why. I do not attempt to judge his political acts or to measure his abilities, but I have desired to bring out his personal traits of sincerity, honesty and devotion to principle and duty, as well as his good fellowship. You know, your father knew, how easy it is for a public man to be misunderstood. It is the duty of those who have seen them near to make their true characters known.

August 28, 1909.

I enclose advance sheets of my third Cleveland paper, having reference to President Lincoln. I was

immensely pleased with what Mr. Cleveland said about Lincoln, and hope it may please you also.

I wonder whether it would be quite convenient for you to have me drop in on you some time this week or next. I would so much enjoy a little chat with you. You must imagine how greatly I have missed, during the last few years, being able to turn to Mr. Nicolay or Col. Hay, to ask them questions about their great chief, or simply to talk about him with them.

To M. H. L.

September 5, 1909.

I got back last Saturday night from a stay of two days with Robert Lincoln and his family in Manchester, Vermont. It was not only the "closeness" of Abraham Lincoln in a house full of his pictures and memories and descendants, that appealed to me, but a new group of attractive people, who have evidently a feeling that should make us old friends, for they want me to bring H. to them next time, and "every year"!

As for the things he told me, at first hand, about his father, they were stupendous! — things of all kinds, tragic, pathetic, mildly humorous, tactful, masterly!

September 5, 1909.

MY DEAR COLLABORATEUR (Is that it?) —

And so it is settled and you are set the task of putting into usable shape (and I hope supplementing by

the things you will get *me* to do) my papers. I have drawn up a list of the subjects, or subdivisions, and it is a job, I assure you! H. is a masterly person!

To H. G.

NEW YORK, September 7, 1909.

I have been all the morning and most of the afternoon "receiving the goods" at the apartment and diminishing the books. The apartment is coming on as well as can be expected. To-night in the stripped "No. 13" I will work at the letters.

September 15, 1909.

Dorothea is working like an extra intelligent beaver — most executively. To-day M. H. L. came. She sent word before to get everything in one room, so I had an appalling array in the library, with a sign up: "Cheer up! the worst is yet to come!" But she was n't appalled. She has been studying the subject at the Philadelphia Historical Society and seems to know what to do. Last night I got to looking over the material and got some jolly ideas out of it.

September 16, 1909.

Coming home from the Astor Hotel last night we passed your old studio, and in a moment a poem flew in at my window, another jewel, I hope, for "The Necklace." I hope you will like it. I wrote last night one stanza (the 2d) before going to bed. The first

and third when I awoke in the middle of the night, going to sleep again after easing my mind of it.

September 26.

Let me see! (What a rush of things — Hudson Fulton celebration and all.) In the afternoon Dodo, Rodman and I and M. H. L. worked at the new house, chiefly over the books. My task is to weed out — weed — weed — weed!

In the evening I went, alone, up to Riverside Drive with some one or two million people and saw the show from the shore as well as I could. It took me an hour or two to get home, waiting for a car not full. Getting home I found the "boiler busted" and had to turn the metre off. Another kick of the old house to get us out.

To a friend

October 24, 1909.

H.'s "happy thought" of getting M. H. L. to organize the literary remains, the letters to and from, the documents of every kind accumulated in a lifetime, has proved "happy" indeed — for us. M. H. L. has worked like a beaver, day and night. We did get her to absent herself from the library at the beginning long enough to see the three parades and the naval illumination, and she has been faithful in attending the "means of Grace" (as if she were not already full of grace), but we have been unable

to drag her to the theatre, or other frivolities. H. is very proud of inventing this scheme of condensing into the new house. I have destroyed bushels of papers, and what is left is now so ordered that I can easily find everything. The catalogue is not complete, but perhaps she can take that up later and finish it in a few days.

What has been done is to me wonderful. It has been an intense experience for me (going over my old letters and papers), for I have had to examine almost every paper — and old excitements, successes, failures, emotions, griefs, leaped to life again and again. But the result is of incalculable value to me. And we have been helped through our bothersome moving by M.'s kindly and delightfully cheery disposition; I don't like to think how hard it would have been on all of us without her at this "Epoch in our Era."

H. and I had been lately cherishing the hope that we might be with you on Wednesday. But the illness of Rosamond, though the doctors say it is not alarming, requires attention and is not without occasion for anxiety; we can't both come; probably neither can come. But, if not, we will surely be with your happy crowd in spirit on Wednesday.

November, 1909

My father did attend the festivity referred to in the foregoing letter, and returned to New York full of gaiety and good spirits, having thoroughly en-

joyed the expedition. Though the family was virtually settled in the new apartment my father and brother still slept at the old house, in order not to lose their votes on election day. On the third of November he came in to see me at the hospital just before I was operated on for appendicitis. The same evening, after being assured that all was well with me, he went to Orange where he spoke on "Cleveland as a Citizen" at a Y.M.C.A. banquet. On the way home he had a severe attack of angina pectoris and was brought back to the apartment by his son and his physician, Dr. J. H. P. Hodgson, in a very serious condition. He recovered rapidly, however, and in about a week was well enough to be moved to a friend's house, away from the noise and discomforts of his still unfinished home. Here, at Mrs. Schuyler Van Rensselaer's, the improvement continued. On the morning of the eighteenth my mother went out, leaving him comfortably ensconced in his bed, reading and writing letters. A few hours later she was hastily summoned to his side. At six o'clock that evening, November 18, 1909, he died.

The letters that follow are his last. The two that close this record were written only a few hours before he died. They are in pencil, but show no sign of failing strength, the handwriting is as energetic, as "headlong" and as firm as ever.

The first is to the "Office" and is dated November 7.

DEAR OFFICE: —

I have n't slipped back a moment since I got back to the house Wednesday night after my circus; but my Pesky Family will not yet allow me to go into MSS., as they are set upon a clean-cut cure; so I shamefacedly send these back for your tender mercies.

A bad night Tuesday — a day of hospital anxiety — two indigestible meals, hurrying to Orange and an "oration" knocked me out. I'm thinking I must go slow about adding speaking to daughter's operations and sausages — hereafter.

I'm truly sorry to be out of harness for a few days, and grateful for your kind messages and calls and the lovely flowers of the faithful Amazon Guard — these things somewhat make up for my fury at being temporarily laid up.

Faithfully,

R. W. G.

To the Office

November 16, 1909.

9 West 10th, 2d story rear

Next door to the Parsonage.

DEAR CENTURIONS: —

I postponed part of my vacation till the later fall, but did not mean to exploit it in this summary manner! Mrs. Gilder assures me that the office reports all smooth — which means that you are all as kind as ever, and as equal to emergencies.

After reporting normal temperature **this morning**

my faithful trained nurse has been permitted to depart.

Last night for the first time I saw this letter of W.'s and was somewhat depressed thereby — for I know you all have done your best, knowing that we need a good and superlative and distinctive feature to keep the public chawing on — and furnishing ammunition for our advertising campaign. Can anything more be done? Did Dr. B. fail us? Was A. C. approached? Would it have cost us more than two or three thousand a year for a few years? I gather from Mrs. Gilder (trained nurse) that it may not be final.

Faithfully,

R. W. G.

To M. H. L.

9 West 10th Street,
November 18, 1909,
Thursday morning.

Yes, indeed, your bright, sympathetic letters are a part of the "cure." I am trying to resign myself to stagnation, so far as my work goes, at the office and everything else. But I read most — read and sleep — and daily comes the handwriting on the envelope that means you remember the sick man. I don't know what my plans are, perhaps it will be Atlantic City yet. Rosamond is doing finely! My 10th Street hostess is as kind and good as she can be. You seem to be getting deeper and deeper into the Girls' Club work — and me loafing in and out of bed and letting the

great world go wag! It is borne in upon me that I have not "let up" enough; I think I must hereafter or —

Since I have been locked up and guarded I have been reading again "Anthony and Cleopatra," and right through Tennyson (now in the midst of the historical plays) along with Brownell's new book — "American Prose Masters" — very learned and acute, and useful; tho' of course the verdicts are not entirely acceptable, how can we all have the same opinions?

I am daily a bit stronger. The apartment is still having its floor "treated." I seem to be in a sort of dream.

II

As I said above

I have again read "Antony and Cleopatra," while they are talking about its presentation at the New Theatre, with renewed admiration at the spontaneous genius of Shakespeare. I am so sorry I never saw Modjeska in the part. I urged her for years to play it, and must have been away when she did so. Dorothea said that when Modjeska, as Cleopatra, said of Antony that he had *seen majesty!* you felt that he had indeed seen it — and in her! In this queenly bearing, I take it, J. M. did not act the part — taking another conception of the part deliberately, and doing *that* well.

What a touch, that, where Cleopatra calls upon her attendant to pity her, but not to *speak to her*. It is in such fire as this that Shakespeare shines, flashes beyond the moderns. Though Tennyson in his historical plays is so good, so wise, and with real humor. (By the way, for humor see Tennyson's cat poem — the old spinster who named her cats after her sweet-hearts!) Tennyson's wonderful felicity was keeping his abilities far into a beautiful old age and writing in his last years those serene spiritual lyrics. Where else exists so wonderfully beautiful a sunset of life? Browning's was beautiful too, but not so serene, for he lost his companion, while Tennyson kept his — that lovely figure I myself saw on her couch at Farringford, — after the bard had been translated.

Brownell quotes me deferentially about Emerson, but refuses to call his poetry "great." I can't see why it is not "great," even when one makes every acknowledgment of its, and its author's, limitations. But Brownell's criticisms are elucidating, well worth while, even if not always accepted by the reader.

Then follows this last letter of all, written hardly more than an hour before he died.

9 W. 10th St.,
November 18, 1909.

DEAR ROSAMOND: —

I keep constant tab on you and deeply rejoice in your daily march towards normality. I am trying to assist my own cure by resigning myself to desue-

tude and inanity — with Shakespeare and Tennyson thrown in! There ought to be some way to pool our respective convalescences.

As to Shakespeare I find his spontaneous energy a thing by itself — though Tennyson, in a very different way is beautiful — Tennyson's plays, though, beside Shakespeare seem strangely tame. 'T is pity they have to be compared, for the two lives and two minds and two arts are so different. Tennyson is wonderfully balanced and wise — but in the plays, at least, he does n't strike fire like the Stratford man.

Tennyson's career is uniquely interesting and beautiful in its prolongation. He was more fortunate than Emerson in that his mental faculties were in perfect shape to a ripe old age and he wrote some of his sagest and loveliest things in the last days — there seems to have been an otherworld light on these latest utterances. You see him standing serene in the after-glow, awaiting in tranquillity the natural end.

THE END



The Dead Port

I.

His was the long yart and voig,
 And well he loved the flannery way
 Let great his wealth at prospered air
 Then ere triumphed day by day
 Then plunged ^{he} in the fray.

II.

And when brave adventure snatched him
 Then did the vanquished find a friend,
 With him and justice through the town,
 No felonian ere saw him bend.
 He soon for soon would send.
III.

Then saw her heritage was lost;
 For, born to gentler use, his youth
 Was wasted in rude strife, the cost
 Too great, they deemed, although in so.
 Through him men learned of truth.

TV.

To me his songs but brief & few
Yet of some lives they are a part;
And on some souls they fell like dew.
Dad-how men say: he gave to art
The epic of the heart.

Rosy

April 14, 1895.

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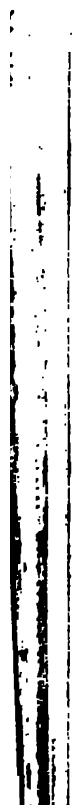
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